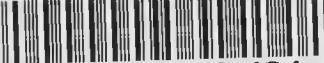


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*The story of . . .*

# Augustana Lutherans in Canada

*As told by . . .*

 Ferdinand Eugene Baglo

a pastor of the Augustana Lutheran Church

*And published by . . .*

The Canada Conference

of the Augustana Lutheran Church

1962

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## CONTENTS

Dedication

*Preface*—by the Canada Conference President

*In Acknowledgment*

<i>Chapter One</i> — The Call of the North .....	5
<i>Chapter Two</i> — The First Fruits .....	9
<i>Chapter Three</i> — From Great Lakes to Pacific .....	19
<i>Chapter Four</i> — The Canada Conference .....	26
<i>Chapter Five</i> — Twin Controversies .....	31
<i>Chapter Six</i> — Adolescence and Maturity .....	38
<i>Chapter Seven</i> — The Dirty Thirties .....	47
<i>Chapter Eight</i> — Outpost in French Canada .....	54
<i>Chapter Nine</i> — War and Aftermath .....	57
<i>Chapter Ten</i> — Young Men's Visions, Old Men's Dreams .....	67
<i>Chapter Eleven</i> — Potpourri—Congregational Histories .....	74
<i>Epilogue</i> —by the Canada Conference President .....	88
<i>Appendix I</i> — Augustana Lutheran Congregations in Canada .....	89
<i>Appendix II</i> — Augustana Pastors Living and Working in Canada .....	91
<i>Appendix III</i> — Canada Conference Conventions .....	96

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*Gratefully Dedicated to the Memory of  
Augustana Lutheran Pioneers in Canada*



EMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ASSINIBOIA, SASKATCHEWAN

Typical of many of the early congregations and church buildings of Augustana Lutherans in Canada, the congregation which worships here was organized in 1913, the year the Canada Conference also came into being.

Tribute was paid to all the pioneers at an historical service of worship held here during the closing convention of the Canada Conference on April 27, 1962 — the publication date of this history.

In honor of the pioneers of our Church in this country, members of Emanuel Lutheran Church made a substantial financial contribution toward the cost of the printing of this history, for which the Canada Conference records its appreciation.

## PREFACE

The Canada Conference is pleased to publish this history of the work of the Augustana Lutheran Church in Canada. Its author is Ferdy E. Baglo, who was ordained in 1958 on a call to serve Augustana congregations at New Stockholm, Dubuc, and Broadview in Saskatchewan. He is now serving in a radio ministry in Tanganyika, Africa, under call from the Board of World Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church.

As a student at the co-operative Lutheran Seminary in Saskatoon, Pastor Baglo became interested in the history of the Augustana Lutheran Church in Canada, and wrote a Bachelor of Divinity thesis on the subject. Aware that much valuable material had been gathered in connection with that project, the president of the Canada Conference recommended to the 1958 convention that the history should be published. The Conference in convention assembled resolved "that the history of the Augustana Lutheran Church in Canada, being prepared by Ferdinand Baglo, be printed."

In order that the history might have a wider appeal than would be the case with a scholarly thesis, we requested that Pastor Baglo re-write the history in a more popular style. This he has done, but one copy of the original thesis, complete with footnotes indicating precisely the sources from which material had been gathered, is on deposit at the library of the Lutheran College and Seminary in Saskatoon. Another copy has been placed in the Augustana Lutheran Church Archives in Rock Island, Illinois.

History is not only a matter of the facts of people and places, of events and dates, but of influences, trends and interpretations. While most of that which follows in this book is a matter of record, there is an element of interpretation, both by the author and on the part of some of his sources. Even if the reader disagrees with conclusions expressed, it is our hope that the heroic efforts of the valiant pioneers of our faith in Canada may be better understood and more deeply appreciated because of this volume. We publish this history as a tribute to those pioneers and dedicate it to their memory.

Not all who had a share in shaping the events recounted in this history can possibly be mentioned in it by name. However, we have sought at least to compile a list of all the congregations which Augustana has ever had in Canada, no matter how small or how short their lives. Also, we have earnestly tried to list the names of all who have lived and served as pastors in Canada. Although many students and lay preachers also served congregations in Canada, we included only the name of one of them in this register, for he not only gave his entire ministry to this country, but actually came here as a seminary graduate. These lists are given as appendices to this book, along with a third—a listing of Conference conventions held in Canada.

Although we have certainly sought to avoid them, we suspect that there may still remain in this history certain minor inaccuracies. Some readers may feel that essential items of information are missing. As long as there remains a Conference office, we will be pleased to receive additional information which may be filed in the official archives of the Conference, to be located at the Lutheran College and Seminary in Saskatoon.

We believe that it is especially appropriate that in the final year of the life of the Augustana Lutheran Church as a separate entity the story of its life in Canada should be printed, and that the publication date should fall during the days of the closing convention of the Canada Conference, the boundaries of which are the geographical limits of Canada.

OTTO A. OLSON, Jr., President  
The Canada Conference of the  
Augustana Lutheran Church.

## IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A book like this is not written in a day, nor is it compiled by the efforts of one man, alone. Represented in the pages to follow are the labours and contributions of many men and women, pastors and laymen alike. To all who have contributed to the writing of this volume, I would like to express my deep appreciation.

My gratitude goes out to the pastors who are serving and who have served in years gone by here on the Canadian field and who have answered my requests for material with liberal help. The secretaries of congregations, who in many cases had to give much time and effort in order to provide answers to a lengthy questionnaire, deserve a vote of thanks. Special gratitude must be expressed to Pastors Oscar A. Benson, Theodore E. Matson, Anton A. Nelson, Swen L. Swenson, Eskil Englund, Emeroy Johnson, Claes Thunberg and Otto A. Olson, Jr.

For translation of the Swedish, I am especially indebted to the late Mrs. C. Wallman of Saskatoon, who helped translate letters, and to Professor T. P. Solem of Luther Seminary in Saskatoon, who spent many sacrificial hours of time translating minutes and articles.

I also wish to thank the librarians of Augustana College and Augustana Theological Seminary, and especially Pastor Joel Lundeen and the Augustana Lutheran Church Archives Committee for making important papers and books and other resources available to me and for encouraging and assisting us in making this publication possible. To all who have assisted in the preparation of this volume, I acknowledge a debt of gratitude. God bless you all.

FERDY E. BAGLO



## *Chapter I*

### THE CALL OF THE NORTH

A letter stamped with the vermilion portrait of the young Queen Victoria and post-marked "Winnipeg, Manitoba," appeared on the desk of Pastor Peter Sjoblom of Red Wing, Minnesota, in the summer of 1883. This investment in a three-cent stamp, a sheet of note-paper and an envelope is credited with sparking Augustana interest in the Dominion of Canada. Mrs. Tobias Nelson was the author of the letter. She appealed to the well-known Minnesota Conference leader for a Swedish Lutheran pastor to come to Winnipeg for the purpose of meeting the great spiritual needs of the people. It was known among the Swedish immigrants in Minnesota that quite a number of their brethren had emigrated to Canada, but this was the first contact made with any of them.

Press agents of the government and the Canadian Pacific Railway were active in Sweden, encouraging young men and whole families to consider the challenge of life in Canada. The government was anxious to settle the great plains in order to assure Canada's claim to the area "north of the 49th parallel". Canada was then but 17 years old and the threat of annexation by the U.S.A. voiced by Senator Charles Sumner in 1868 still hung over the young country. The Railway Company was anxious to lure hard-working labourers to Canada in order to help push the railroad through to the Pacific coast. The C.P.R. was equally anxious to sell land granted to it by the government along the route. An immigrant publication called "The Scandinavian Canadian" was published by government and railroad for some years to advertise the possibilities and promises of the virgin prairies. Their efforts in the field of promotion had met with little success at first. Even the offer of liberal land grants, work animals and farm implements failed to attract the Swedes. The United States still caught their imaginations. While an overwhelming tide of emigrants flooded into the U.S. only a trickle turned northward to Canada. The situation changed in 1880 when the U.S. government altered its immigration policy. The U.S. policy change and the C.P.R.'s enticing salaries combined to divert the immigrant stream to Canada and particularly to her vast virgin prairie region. The railroad had reached Winnipeg and was now traversing the province of Manitoba. The city, a wild, exciting frontier settlement ringed with temporary housing and bustling with hopeful adventurers, was now the hub of immigration in the west.

In June, 1883, a team of Minnesota Conference pastors who were touring northern Minnesota determined to follow the railway to its terminus at Winnipeg. Whether the idea was inspired by Mrs. Nelson's letter or not is unknown. The leader of the group was no less a personage than the patriarch of the Augustana Lutheran Church, the Reverend T. N. Hasselquist. His comments on their brief Canadian sojourn were printed in the July 4, 1883 edition of "Augustana och Missionaren". He and his companions were surprised to discover warm weather in the land thought to "belong to the world of ice and bears". The endless, unsettled prairie extending north to Winnipeg amazed them; its potential seemed limitless. They arrived in Winnipeg in the early hours of the morning and spent the day tramping the streets. Their visit, because it was the first by Augustana pastors to Canada, is an important milestone but here its importance ends. Evidently no contact was made with any immigrant Swedes.

Pastor Hasselquist recorded his sole discovery: that the hotels of Winnipeg at that time were expensive and filthy.

The next, and more important, visits to Canada were made by an itinerant missionary of the Minnesota Conference, the Reverend L. A. Hocanzon. A few months after Hasselquist's visit, Reverend Hacanzon, following up Mrs. Nelson's letter and the suggestion of Swedish settlers in the Red River Valley, traveled to Winnipeg on the first of three visits. He must not have had the letter with him for he admits: "I had neither name nor address of a single countryman". All day he hunted, finally meeting up with a water-carrier by the name of Pettersen. Pettersen introduced him to a number of Swedish immigrants and to the pastor of the English Methodist Church where he was attending services. The Methodist minister hospitably offered the building for Lutheran church services. Hocanzon accepted and a large gathering of Swedish Lutherans met despite a snowstorm and temperatures of eight below, to hear the gospel and receive the sacraments. Hocanzon was shocked to find the frontier conditions under which his countrymen were living. He found them in shacks built of lumber ends covered with tar paper. Mothers and children were left for days and weeks while the men laboured on the railway. He was called to baptize a set of twins belonging to the owner of a boarding house. He entered the building on the Sunday and discovered it to be "one great shed with partitions like stalls for animals with sleeping room for eight men. Every stall was full of men . . . all playing cards with whisky bottles standing in the open windows. It was ghastly!"

It was winter when Pastor Hocanzon came again. His description of the arrival in Winnipeg indicated the hardships which were suffered by pastors and people during the pioneer era. For three days and nights rain had been falling "and the streets were soaked so that the tracks under the street-cars were sunk down in the mud, and on the tracks stood long rows of cars which could not be moved . . . (they) were frozen solid in the mud." He walked for some distance to the place where he was to spend the night. "They had no coal to build a fire so I lay fully clothed, soaked as I was, in an unheated room." His heart was warmed, however, when 75 people turned out for the Sunday service.

It was 40 below when Hocanzon arrived in Winnipeg for his third visit. Nevertheless, a full church awaited him for the Sunday service. The people pressed him for the establishment of regular work and the organization of a congregation in Winnipeg. Pastor Hocanzon was sympathetic to their desires and promised to carry their request to the church officials in Minnesota. He had visited the land office and was impressed by the immigration challenge confronting the church. He was determined that Lutheran work for the Swedes of Canada ought to begin soon.

While in Winnipeg on this occasion he was called upon to marry a beautiful Swedish girl and her fiance. Legal technicalities threatened to snarl the plans, so he called on a lawyer. Said Hocanzon, "He could not give me any information, nevertheless, he charged me two dollars for his trouble." It was the Methodist minister who rescued the situation and made it possible for the wedding to proceed as planned.

When Hocanzon arrived back in Minnesota he was full of enthusiasm for the proposal of Augustana work in Canada. His high hopes were soon dashed to the ground.

"Never have I been so disappointed," he wrote later. The Minnesota Conference officials had informed him that there were neither men nor means for any undertaking of that kind. Hocanzon never returned to Manitoba.

The following summer a student, name unknown, was sent to spend a few months among the Swedes in Winnipeg. His reports prompted the Conference

meeting in West Union, Minnesota, to petition the Synod Mission Board "to support the maintenance of a travelling preacher in Manitoba . . . to arrange and carry on mission work among our countrymen . . ." The petition was granted at the Synod meeting in Rockford, Illinois in 1885 but the next year the Mission Board dolefully reported that they had tried to call a missionary, and that the candidate (H. Olson of Kansas City) had declined the call. The report went on: "the Board regrets that due to the state of the Mission treasury they have been unable to call another." Money and manpower were again an insurmountable problem. The matter of a Canadian mission was referred back to the Minnesota Conference. Prospects appeared bleak. Three years had passed since the initial visit of Augustana pastors to Canada; three more were to pass before the first Canadian congregation was to be organized.

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Conference hit upon the strategy of sending pastor-volunteers for brief visits to the Dominion. One of the first of these volunteers was a man who was to play an important role in the early development of Augustana work in Canada. He was the Reverend Svante Udden. He visited Winnipeg for the first time on September 13, 1885. A crowd of more than 200 people listened intently to the Gospel message he brought. His investigations in the city revealed a thriving Mission Covenant congregation which had been organized the previous January. The zealous work of this congregation and that of a number of Scandinavian sects prompted him to remind his brethren in Minnesota of their responsibility to the Lutheran Swedes.

In 1886, in another effort to encourage immigration, the Canadian government set aside two tracts of land for the settlement of Scandinavians, one of these in the area of Minnedosa, Manitoba, the other near Whitewood, District of Assiniboia, (now part of the province of Saskatchewan) Northwest Territories. The tide of Swedish immigrants previously stopped up at Winnipeg now swept in two streams westward. The new Canadians, chiefly from northern Sweden and some from the U.S.A., found good land, tracts of timber and conditions for building relatively stable communities. It was the Mission Covenant congregation which took the initiative in sending the first preachers to these settlements. Lutheran work was at a standstill. For two years, while the Swedish settlers were clearing land, putting up homes and schools, the Church was stalemated in its attempt to bring them the Gospel according to their Lutheran faith.

At the Minnesota Conference annual meeting in 1887, J. G. Lagerstrom was called as mission pastor for Winnipeg but he declined the call. It was not until 1888 that the Augustana Synod was able to send another pastor to Canada. Svante Udden had answered the call again. He was sent by the Minnesota Conference executive committee for the purpose of touring the prairie settlements and reporting back on the situation as he found it. He traveled extensively for six weeks. His travels took him as far east as Rat Portage (now Kenora, Ontario) and as far west as Medicine Hat, Alberta.

He learned that there were 400 Swedes in Winnipeg. Of these, 20 had become members of the Mission Covenant congregation. The vast number, therefore, were without any church connection. No increase in the immigrant population was foreseen due to the adverse employment situation. He discovered that a group of prominent men in the Mission Covenant congregation had organized the "Northwestern Scandinavian Mission Society" to meet the spiritual needs of Swedish immigrants in Canada. Established along Congregational lines with financial support from the United States, the Society was sending preachers into the outlying settlements. Udden told the Conference executive "incredible efforts are being put forth to win more of these immigrants . . . it will seem that the Swedes in Canada will slowly and imperceptibly be drawn into Congregationalism."

Udden's first visit to Rat Portage, 130 miles east of Winnipeg, did not

impress him, but he prophesied growth. He found fifty Swedes working as labourers in the flour mill and several sawmills.

His third Sunday was spent in the New Stockholm colony, 250 miles west of Winnipeg. Located in the District of Assiniboia, the settlement had been made twenty miles north of the C.P.R. station, "Whitewood", across a valley in wooded undulating terrain. Here he found a population of one hundred Swedes. They were largely poor folk whose earthly possessions were few when they arrived in the new land. Udden found that their hopes were high. It was estimated that the population would double if the crops fulfilled their promising beginning. Most of the immigrants were from Strom Parish in Jamtland. Pastor Udden commented, "Several were of a Christian spirit, and heartily devoted to the Lutheran faith and to our Augustana Church. Here the mission society from Winnipeg had really gone to work."

Upon leaving New Stockholm, Pastor Udden traveled westward on a wild goose chase. He had been told that there was a sizeable Swedish colony in Regina, capital of the Northwest Territories. He found none. Three hundred miles further west, at Medicine Hat, he made other investigations and found but a few Swedes in nearby Dunsmere. These he gathered together one evening for Bible study.

Returning eastward, Udden stopped at Fleming, just across the boundary from Assiniboia, in Manitoba. Seven or eight settlers were forming a new Swedish colony there. At Oak Lake, nearer to Winnipeg, he found a few Swedes working for the railroad. While between trains in Portage la Prairie, he located a few Swedes working for the railroad there.

Udden reported, "From here I went on the Manitoba and Northwestern Railway to Minnedosa, seventy-eight miles northwest, to visit the largest colony in Canada, New Scandinavia." Here, Udden held a number of services in various parts of the settlement. He learned that in the two years since the settlement had been established no preacher had visited the colony until just two weeks before his arrival. He guessed that the total population was between two and three hundred. "The people wanted to belong to the Lutheran Church," he reported, "but did not know of our Augustana Church." Again, he found the settlers were very poor materially, but of a fine spirit. He had come to the colony with mixed feelings, having been told that a preacher might not be welcomed to the area. But he found that he was received with friendliness and gratitude.

Upon leaving New Scandinavia he stopped off at Selkirk, Dufrost, and Plum Coulee to visit with tiny colonies of Swedes. He found that the majority of section workers on the railroad were immigrants from Sweden. Udden closed his report with these words: ". . . the Swedish immigration to Canada has begun and with a good crop now assured for the second consecutive year, one may be certain that the stream will increase. Now, we do not, as a few years ago, have to do mainly with a bunch of wild adventurers and railroad bums, but the kind of people who have come here to settle down and build homes. May they not suffer the lack of a spiritual home illuminated by the clear light of God's Word." It is evident from these lines that one of the chief criticisms of work in Canada had been the transient nature of the immigrant population. Udden detected a change and was obviously in agreement with Hocanzon's recommendation that permanent mission work in Canada be established without further delay. Udden however, did not deem it wise to organize congregations until permanent workers were on the scene.

Now the period of preliminary survey and examination of the field was over. The "call of the north" was recognized as a valid cry for spiritual assistance. Augustana was now determined to answer this "Macedonian call" and to establish a Swedish Lutheran church in the expansive Dominion of Canada.

## *Chapter II*

### THE FIRST FRUITS

It was in 1889 that the Minnesota-Canada "shuttle-service" began. Pastors from the Minnesota Conference volunteered a week or a month of their time to take trips north of the border to minister to the lonely Swedish settlements in Canada. This was the only alternative in the face of the problem of securing a permanent missionary worker for the Dominion. Call after call was extended but the answer was always a negative one. "One after the other was called, but none was willing to leave the fleshpots of Minnesota to go to the uncertain wanderings in the desert of Sinai," wrote Canada Conference historian John E. Samuelson in 1938, when commenting on this difficult period. Perhaps the uncertainty of the situation in Canada, the climate, and the pressure of expanding work in Minnesota all combined to hinder acceptance of the Canadian call. When the Conference Executive had all but given up hope of securing a permanent missionary for Canada, one of their own number answered the call. Pastor J. S. Ryding accepted the assignment, but after a brief experience in the northern wilderness gave up the idea of settling in Canada. His name is remembered, however, for the fact that he was the presiding chairman at a meeting during which Augustana's first Canadian congregation was organized.

The meeting took place on October 3rd, 1889, in the home of E. Hammarstrom in New Stockholm Colony, Assiniboia, Northwest Territories. The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran New Stockholm congregation was brought into being with ninety-eight names, men, women and children, inscribed on the charter roll. It is strange that Winnipeg did not earn the distinction of giving birth to Augustana's first congregation. Perhaps the rural community, settled and confined as it was seemed better suited for the establishment of a congregation. Ryding, expecting to stay in Canada, probably felt that it was the proper time to organize. However, it is evident that this feeling did not extend to the establishment of a congregation in Winnipeg. We may only speculate on why organization of the city work was delayed.

The first Augustana Board of Administration in Canada was elected that night in New Stockholm. They were as follows: Chairman—A. G. Sahlmark, Secretary—J. Teng. Deacons—Z. Oslund, J. Teng, A. G. Sahlmark, E. Christoferson, A. P. Sjostrom, and Olaf Teng. Trustees—E. J. Wickberg, Kaspar Engebretson and P. A. Norlin. These men had a lot of responsibility resting on their shoulders. The new congregation would be left to tend itself for a number of years, with only sporadic visits from itinerant Minnesota Conference pastors. On November 30, 1889, the constitution was adopted and a petition for membership in the Minnesota Conference drafted.

The Mission Covenant people had already organized in the New Stockholm colony, having met for that purpose on October 20, 1888. Their work was going well. Perhaps this fact was another reason for Ryding's choosing this time for organization in the colony. It is obvious that a keen rivalry existed for some years in many Swedish-Canadian communities between the Mission Covenant people . . . representing the free church, congregational outlook . . . and the Augustana . . . representing the traditional Lutheran position. It is unfortunate that many settlements found Christians lined up in two opposing and sometimes hostile camps, much to the satisfaction of the unbelieving element. In

some cases, the contrasting opinions of the Swedish Christians tended to drive the two camps into extreme positions of legalistic pietism over against broad-minded liberalism. Together, the Swedish people with real Christian convictions might have exerted a greater influence on their communities . . . but division into factions tended to weaken their witness. It is amazing what God was able to accomplish in the midst of these circumstances.

It was one year later, almost to the day, October 4, 1890, that another organization meeting was held, this time in the hub city of Winnipeg. It came as a result of a visit from Pastor L. G. Almen of New London, Minnesota, who was on a brief one-month mission visit to Canada. The meeting was held in the dining room of the Svea Hotel. Forty people were admitted as members of Sion Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, and the constitution of the Augustana Synod was adopted. The congregation had not been organized for more than four months when a major crisis developed. It was the Reverend Svante Udden, on his third missionary journey to Canada, who encountered the situation and came to the rescue in April, 1891.

The congregation had been without pastoral care since its organization. Some of the members had heeded the invitation of an Anglican minister who offered to supply a pastor immediately if the congregation would withdraw from the Augustana Synod. He maintained that there were no important doctrinal differences between the two church bodies. Pastor Udden's arrival was timely for it coincided with the date of the meeting which had been called to decide the matter. The Anglican minister was present for the meeting. Pastor Udden shrewdly challenged the Anglican's statement that there were not doctrinal differences by inviting him, therefore, to accept the Lutheran doctrine and become an Augustana pastor. "His refusal revealed him as a proselyte to the members of the congregation, and by acclamation the proposal was rejected when the vote was taken. The Swedish immigrants might be unfamiliar with and critical of the Augustana Synod but they were not ready to leave the Lutheran Church." Commenting further, Conference historian, J. E. Samuelson wrote, "The fact, however, that even a body like the Anglican Church has been guilty of such proselytism shows what a proselyters paradise Canada has been and still is."

During the spring and summer of 1891 a veritable deluge of pastors from Minnesota poured into Canada for short visits of from one to three months. Among these, in addition to Pastor Udden, were C. I. Collin, L. P. Stenstrom, J. Alm, C. A. Bar, J. L. Haff, J. F. Seedoff, J. Lundquist and L. G. Almen.

Pastor Almen presided at the organization meeting of Augustana's third Canadian congregation. Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Scandinavia, (Erickson) Manitoba, came into being on May 23rd, 1891, with forty-four communicants on the charter roll. Through some unknown factors, the completion of the necessary steps toward full organization were not made until February 17, 1893, at a meeting then conducted by the Reverend Svante Udden.

Interest in the Canada Mission was mounting among pastors and people of the Minnesota Conference. Pastor Hocanzon drew up plans for a church building in Winnipeg, and Pastor L. G. Almen solicited financial gifts from among congregations in Minnesota, collecting \$400 for this project. All the while, the Executive Board continued to call pastors for permanent work in Canada with the same negative response.

In the summer of 1891, Student A. G. Olson (later pastor of Bethesda Church in Kenora, Ontario) came to Winnipeg on a call from the Minnesota Conference Executive Committee. He faced a difficult situation. The people had begun to doubt the sincerity of Augustana. They wondered if the Church was really willing and able to carry out a mission program in Canada. The people of Sion Church were in the midst of an ambitious building program.

Their debt stood at \$1,000 and there was yet an estimated expenditure of \$800 before the building would be completed. The building program was undoubtedly more than the people had bargained for, and they were worried lest it should be a burden greater than they could bear.

Student Olson visited Rat Portage and discovered that the Scandinavian population had risen to 300. At New Stockholm, he found that the Mission Covenant people were erecting a church building and possessed a "larare". He told the Executive Board on his return, ". . . the Lutherans plan in the near future to build a church and they would do it if only someone would take the initiative."

The appeal from Olson resulted in renewed activity on the part of Pastors Almen, Seedoff and Haff to get financial aid for the building programs in Canada.

Olson left in February, 1892, to be followed by Student J. A. Mattson. And so the steady stream of transient ministers continued.

In July, 1892, a major milestone in the history of Canadian missions was reached when Pastor Svante Udden accepted the call to become the first Swedish Lutheran minister to reside and work in Canada. With the valuable background of his three missionary journeys Pastor Udden was an excellent choice for the job. It was more than the Executive Committee could have hoped for. The decision to accept the call did not come easily for him.

"With much fear and trembling I accepted the call from the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Conference in July of 1892 as Conference Mission Worker in Canada with Winnipeg as headquarters. At first, I declined, but Pastor Peter Sjoblom who for several years had been Conference President and had carried a deep concern (for Canada) was insistant, so I consented. On my fourth journey to Canada I was accompanied by my wife. Two children, two small dear boys, had some months before been taken by death home to their Heavenly Father and a girl some years before that. Blessed little ones, they escaped the bitter storms of life and found a happier home than would have ever been possible with their parents . . . a home which would not move from place to place."

Pastor Udden arrived at Winnipeg in early August, 1892. He found that the Swedish population had been increased by several hundred immigrants who had arrived from Sundsvahl and Halland. Employment opportunities were plenteous in the city so jobs were available for most of them. Sion congregation had occupied its new church building. The structure was thirty-two feet by forty-six feet and equipped with a balcony and tower but the spire was absent and painting and fences needed. The little congregation was \$2,200 in debt to the Synod. Udden said, "None of the members had any property worth mentioning as all were poor workmen or tradesmen. All the immigrants were poor. The future did not look bright, and to top it all off, ". . . the unbelieving element was strong even in those days, and besides we had denominational troubles. It was during the dark and sombre times of the nineties when everything was standing still and the population (of Winnipeg) numbered less than 40,000." But, said Pastor Udden, "Here was a field that needed sowing with the noble seed and when everyone looked forward with hope, it did not befit the sower of the heavenly husbandman to be discouraged."

Sunday School began in August, 1892, with thirty pupils and increased to sixty. Swedish Bible History and Catechism were taught.

Pastor Udden's salary was set at \$800 with parsonage and traveling expenses.

If Pastor Udden was reluctant to settle in Canada, it was not revealed in his work. He plunged into the challenging situation with tremendous zeal and courage. His six year ministry established Augustana work in Canada and proved

that the Minnesota Conference was indeed serious in its concern for the Swedish Lutherans in the far-flung Dominion. He made many lengthy and trying missionary journeys during his career, ministering to the many isolated communities and surveying new fields of responsibility. He found time to write extensively. He published his own newspaper "Vaktaren" and wrote a book titled "Fran Canada", for the publishing house of the Church. Throughout, he proved to be an eager promoter and supporter of Canadian missions.

The first church building to be erected in Canada by Augustana Lutherans was dedicated in Winnipeg on October 30, 1892. Made possible by donations and loans from the Minnesota Conference, the building became the congregation's pride and joy. Pastor Peter Sjoblom, Minnesota Conference president, assisted by Pastor S. G. Swenson, conducted the dedication service before a happy congregation. Built on Henry Avenue, opposite Laura Street, it was conveniently located for the Swedes who were chiefly employed at the nearby C.P.R. yards and shops. Augustana's roots were now set deeper in Canadian soil.

In September of the same year, Pastor Udden visited the Scandinavia settlement and conducted a worship service in one of the homes, "since there was not to be found any church or school house in the colony." Pastor Udden recollects, "A great number of them that owned a few beasts of burden had only oxen. Some drove a pair of these sixteen miles to services. These miles went by swiftly when one had something to look forward to, but a cold rain ending in snow made the latter part of the way difficult."

In February, Pastor Udden found it necessary to return to the colony in order to re-organize the work in the colony. He took a train to Minnedosa and traveled the remainder of the way by sleigh. It was a grim winter. "Since one had to sit in a sleigh, he had to be well equipped with clothing for so long a trip. From the station the road went through valleys and over hills until it ended in the still forest. The evening was beautiful and the wind very quiet. The next day a meeting was held in a house which was crowded to the uttermost." It was at this meeting that Udden led the congregation to re-organize and elect new officers. The decision was also reached to build a church, but not until after some excited discussion. "At the meeting a number of persons attended who did not belong to the congregation, and they took part in the discussion until it became necessary to bid them withdraw. I could not understand why they were so anxious by cunning to stop the awakened from erecting a meeting house for the congregation." Evidently, it was all a misunderstanding. The outsiders believed the churchmembers were planning to build a parochial school and exert undue influence on the public school board.

The church had received forty acres of land that spring from the government. These, together with two acres donated to the congregation by a member for a cemetery, were chosen as the site for the building. F. G. Hill, Pete Johnson and G. Anderson were elected to serve on the building committee. Later, Pete Johnson received a contract to erect a building 24 feet by 30 feet at a cost of \$120.00 with the understanding that he was to have it finished by October 1, 1893. Timbers were cut and hauled that very month of February. The church was not completed on time, but was ready for occupancy in time for Christmas. It was not dedicated, however, until July 16, 1896. Then, Dr. E. Norelius, president of the Minnesota Conference, conducted the dedication service, assisted by Pastor Udden and Student C. A. Larson.

Pastor Udden soon recognized that the work in Canada was more than one man could handle. He pleaded with the Executive Committee to send him a pastor in time for summer, the most favorable season for work.

A theological student, John Truedson, was sent to Pastor Udden and he

laboured very successfully during June, July and August, 1893, in Oak Lake, Fleming and New Stockholm. Again, Pastor Udden pleaded for assistance. This time a member of the Executive Committee was freed from his responsibilities in order to give aid to the destitute Canadian congregations. Pastor J. Fremling spent six weeks visiting the mission field and ministering to the scattered flocks.

He found Winnipeg, "very weak but with high hopes". He waxed eloquent about the Scandinavia settlement. "(It) has a certain beauty for him who loves northern nature. It is covered with pine, spruce and poplar. The spruce are thick and beautiful. In the forests you find many varieties of berries, among them even lingon and among the flowers you find the historically famous linnea borealis. There are many small lakes, among the largest are Otter and Round Lake. The latter lies in the upper part of the settlement which is called Norge. Every other section is a homestead and every other section is railway land. By paying \$10 together with residence of three years on the land, 160 acres can be had. The railroad land costs \$3 per acre. At least one hundred Swedish families could be counted last August in Scandinavia. Their number is constantly being increased by immigration from Sweden. They do not go to a great deal of work to develop the land. The most of them occupy themselves with stock raising. During the winter they cut wood and haul it to Minnedosa and trade it for all manner of household goods. The areas which are without woods consist of luxuriant grasslands . . ." Six miles southeast from Minnedosa in the Hazelwood district he found six Swedish families. Here an Anglican by the name of Arthur Dentith had on his own initiative and with gifts from England erected a church building. He offered its use to the Swedes for Lutheran services. Pastor Fremling recommended a preaching place be started in that community.

In Rat Portage, Fremling found many Scandinavians employed in the sawmills. He discovered that the area was a vacation paradise for wealthy families from Winnipeg, but needless to say, none of which were Swedes. He found that the Scandinavians had built their homes on the spruce-laden hills east of the city, constituting a community all their own. Services were being held in a school house but as yet no congregation had been organized. At the other extreme end of the Canadian mission field was New Stockholm. Here, Fremling confirmed two boys on August 20th and conducted a service of Holy Communion. He was happy to see that the congregation had laid the foundation for a church building and was hoping to call a pastor in the near future. The congregation had been served for a short time the previous winter by Pastor E. Hedin and was now being served by Student Truedson.

So far, Augustana work had been restricted to the two eastern prairie provinces and western Ontario. During Dr. Fremling's stay in Canada in the summer of 1893, he and Pastor Udden decided to make a survey trip further west. Missionary Udden had traveled as far west as Medicine Hat in 1888, but until now, no journeys beyond New Stockholm had been undertaken. Both Pastor Udden and Pastor Fremling were gifted writers and we are grateful for the interesting article describing the trip which Pastor Udden prepared for his little newspaper "Vaktaren". It gives us a vivid glimpse into days gone by.

"We began . . . on the 21st of August. The first day the journey went through Manitoba's fertile grain fields where reaping machines were in constant activity although the greater part of this year's crop was harvested. Everywhere the crop was beautiful to behold . . . Toward evening the grain fields decreased and the land became less inhabited. Next morning the same barrenness prevailed . . . by noon the Rocky Mountains were in sight . . . The train stops . . . we hurry out and look around. We find ourselves in a deep valley with high cliffs all around. We find a number of Swedes working in coal mines over there in

the sides of the cliffs." They journeyed on to Banff National Park, climbed a small crag to admire the scenery and were filled with inspiration by God's magnificent mountain handiwork. They returned by rail to Calgary where they contacted a Swedish merchant, J. A. Nolan who operated a store on 8th Street southwest. Nolan was a member of the Presbyterian Church, but was interested in promoting Swedish Lutheran work in Alberta. He advised them concerning their proposed trip north through the province.

At Wetaskiwin, they reported: "We were met at the station by J. G. Olin, I. Bengtson, H. Utas and others. It is to this place that many of the Swedes have come to take land this past year." They found it different from the prairie they were accustomed to . . . "luxurious grass and here and there bushes and groves of trees." On Sunday a service was held in the home of Mr. A. Sigalit. They learned that the colony had begun six years previously when five families the Sigalits, Utas', Malmos and Tennis arrived from Gamla-Svenskby in southern Russia. These folks spoke Swedish, German and Russian and had left their adopted homeland, Russia, when economic and political conditions were proving difficult. How they had come to Russia in the first place is an interesting story.

The forefathers of these folks had lived on two small islands in the Baltic Sea. When Sweden lost a war with Russia the two islands were exchanged as payment for war debt. Katherine the Great took the Swedes off the islands and force-marched them to southern Russia. There they were given a new home. They had their own village, church, school and customs. They were not permitted, however, to keep their Swedish names. The farmland proved good and they prospered there. There was a German settlement just across the Nippa River and the two communities got along well, even exchanging worship services. The Swedes trained their doctors, nurses and pastors at Helsingfors in Finland, then a part of Russia. Civil war changed things. The Russian language was required in schools, men were drafted into the army, their beautiful church was turned into a stable for horses and then into a theatre. Some emigrated in 1892 and in the following years until 1930 when Count Folke Bernadotte, on behalf of the International Red Cross, led the remainder back to Sweden from whence many emigrated to North America.

When Fremling and Udden met the "Russian-Swedes" they were just beginning what was to become an influential Swedish Lutheran community. One of the Swedes, Mr. J. C. Olin, was "an energetic building contractor who had had a hand in building most of the houses in the new town and had already begun a furniture business." There were two hundred souls in the community, some German, some English, but most were Swedes. Homesteads were being taken up in an area twenty miles around.

Fremling and Udden departed by railway north to Edmonton. Here they found a well established city on the banks of the Saskatchewan River. "Along the river, gold is found in the sand and there is profitable placer-mining here." Commenting on Edmonton's future they reported as follows: "We had heard all manner of descriptions of this country and even wondered about its practicability, but having seen it we cannot give room to such doubts. To us, it seemed as if we had entered another Red River Valley and it surprised us that this country had not been settled before. The climate is not as cold as in the Red River Valley, according to reports. The best land lies along the Saskatchewan and Peace Rivers . . ." Their economic survey continues. ". . . stock can be bought for reasonable prices. A pair of horses (broncos) broken costs about \$75 and these need no more feed than a pair of oxen. In the not too distant future populous villages should flourish in this area which could ship most of their products westward . . . but for the present they get their income from mining."

They had come a long distance. "In Edmonton, we were as near the North

Pole as anyone can come by way of railroad. When the railroad is extended another 100 miles to reach the Athabasca River, then there will be an open passageway to the north Arctic Ocean. The journey can be continued by Hudson's Bay Company steamboat on this and the MacKenzie River 2,000 miles to the Arctic Sea. We arrived too late in the year for such a boat trip so we turned about . . . ”

If they were not already enthusiastically interested in the Canadian mission field, they were after this journey. Pastor Udden and Pastor Fremling made use of every opportunity to acquaint their fellow pastors and the people of the Minnesota Conference of the work that was being done, and that which needed doing in this northern mission field. However, it was to be another five years before Augustana work would take root in the shadow of the Rockies.

When Pastor Udden returned to Winnipeg, he resumed his missionary tasks in the city and distant mission stations. Among his calling places was Rat Portage in the Lake-of-the-Woods region of Northwestern Ontario. A small group of Scandinavian Lutherans who were concerned about their spiritual welfare were holding services in Lakeside School. Pastor Udden on one of his visits in 1893 made arrangements for them to be served by Student J. A. Mattson.

The next summer, Mr. N. P. Sjostrom, a student from the theological seminary in Rock Island conducted services and ministered to the spiritual needs of the people. Evidently, his services were appreciated for there arose a desire to organize a congregation, and on July 1st, 1894, in the schoolhouse Pastor Udden presided at a discussion of the subject. Mr. Sjostrom was authorized to receive the names of all those who were interested in becoming members. At this meeting, Mr. John Kron and Mr. John Jeppson were elected secretary and treasurer, respectively.

On August 16, 1894, Rev. Udden returned to Rat Portage and at another meeting in the schoolhouse witnessed the birth of the Swedish Bethesda Lutheran congregation. Messrs. Paul Anderson, John Kron and John Jeppson were elected deacons, and Messrs. Edvor Roslund, John Norling and John Anderson were named as the trustees. Through the generosity of the Western Lumber Company, one of the seven lumber companies in the district at that time, the present site of Bethesda Church, a lot 150 feet by 50 feet, was purchased for one dollar. The understanding was that a church building would be erected on the site. Just two months later, on October 9, 1894, a committee of five was elected to make necessary arrangements for the building of a church. Mr. John Carlson was placed in charge of construction. The labour was to be provided largely by members of the congregation. The building fund began to grow through generous contributions and money received from social gatherings held for that purpose. On November 4, 1894, the congregation joyfully witnessed the laying of the cornerstone. The first service in the building was a "Julotta" on Christmas morning, held even though the church was still a mere framework.

Bethesda congregation had the privilege of receiving the second resident Augustana pastor in Canada, Rev. A. C. H. Helander in July, 1895. No doubt, Pastor Udden and members of the Minnesota Conference Executive Committee rejoiced that the appeals on behalf of the Canadian mission field were at last being answered. On October 6, 1895, Pastor Udden, assisted by the newly installed minister, conducted an impressive dedication service at Rat Portage. Bethesda Lutheran Church is the oldest church building still in use in Kenora, and the oldest Augustana Church building in Canada being used today.

The pioneers, with their memories of prominent church buildings in their far-off homelands, longed for worship homes in their new settlements. An interesting record of one of the first rural church building programs in Canada has been discovered. One of the pioneers, A. G. Olson, records the raising of

a church in the New Stockholm settlement. There was a spiritual awakening in the colony and Olson's tiny home, 12 feet by 14 feet, could not contain the many who wanted to meet and study the Scriptures. "For example, one Easter Sunday there were no less than 15 ox-teams at E. A. Berg's farm, and all sleds had been filled to capacity with people. When we gathered for the evening meeting, we failed to get the lamps to burn for lack of oxygen." When the subject of a site for the church came up, someone reminded the group that the government was willing to give every congregation on the prairies forty acres of land as a "Mission Grant". A request was sent in to Regina with the result that the S.W. corner of S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 5, Township 19a, R. 2W 2M was set aside for the New Stockholm congregation. Permission was granted for the members to cut the timber needed for the church building from the trees growing in the ravines of nearby Qu'Appelle Valley, about seven miles from the building site. "Although there were no roads the work was accomplished with great difficulty for the logs had to be hauled in winter only. A committee was appointed to obtain a list of material required and the number of feet of logs each member would fell and haul. When the list was completed 38 persons had agreed to fell and haul 6,602 logs and donate 77 days labour."

The natural resources of the colony were still further brought into use. "It was agreed to quarry rock for the foundation and lime for mortar as there was much limestone in the banks of the ravine. It was decided to send some men who were experienced in burning lime to select a place for the building of the lime-kiln, preferably near some dry timber. They had to build a cabin in which to live, for it required many nights and days to burn the lime. Lime could not be bought on the market for we had no money with which to purchase it."

Lath was made from slender willow limbs from the Qu'Appelle Valley. Windows and doors were homemade by Axel Olson for the price of \$46 (those same windows were auctioned off later for the sum of \$56. Pastor Udden's pleas before the Minnesota Conference on their behalf fetched \$150. A. G. Olson, evidently attending the Conference convention as a representative from Canada, spoke at a church in Minneapolis and received the offering which amounted to \$38.15. A list for freewill offerings carried by Olson netted \$16 for the purchase of window glass. The people of Winnipeg contributed \$65 and the Presbyterian minister, Dr. H. McKay, who lived and served on an Indian reservation a few miles from the New Stockholm settlement, showed his continued interest and support with a contribution of \$20. The gifts and offerings were supplemented by monies received by other means. Olson's wife made a silk quilt, which when raffled off, brought \$25. Flowers were sold for \$3. These sums were used to pay for the stove.

Thus it was, with much ingenuity, hard work and sacrifice by the people of the committee and generous interest on the parts of friends afar, the congregation at New Stockholm raised its first church building. The building committee, consisting of Ingle Sjodin, J. Johanson, J. Westerlund and A. Stenberg. E. A. Berg directed the construction, which began on June 6, 1893. A handsome building 50 feet by 32 feet became the congregation's spiritual home. The church was not dedicated until July 26, 1896 when Pastor E. Norelius, then president of the Minnesota Conference, conducted the service. The congregation was meanwhile served by lay preacher A. G. Olson "med trohet och mit samt markbar framgang" as the Minnesota Conference minutes of 1896 described his work.

Meanwhile, the Swedish colonies were increasing in size as more and more immigrants from Sweden and the U.S. arrived. In several Scandinavian weeklies advertisements like the following taken from Vaktaren appeared, inviting them

to come. "Manitoba: The great grain and cattle producing province yet has room for thousands. Free government land, or 'Homestead', in a number of places in the province. Cheap railroad land, from \$3.00 to \$10.00 per acre, close to churches, schools and railroads. Fertile wheat land. The best hay and pasture land. Excellent fishing. Come to Winnipeg where you will meet friends who will give you advice. For further information, new books, maps, all free, write to the Hon. Thomas Greenway, Minister of Agriculture and Immigration, Winnipeg."

This growing tide of newcomers encouraged the settlers to organize congregations in a number of places. Four new congregations were born to Augustana in 1897. At Percival and Fleming, in what is now the Province of Saskatchewan, and in Tyndall and Whitemouth, Manitoba, missions became congregations. Of the four, only Percival was to play an important role in the later development of Augustana work in Canada. Here, many of the Swedes had come from the New Stockholm settlement and were members of the church there.

Percival had been a preaching point up until this time, but now the desire for established work was indicated. Halvar Hanson, Jacob Wenman, M. O. Strandlund, Nels Anderson, Per Johan Alm, N. O. Erikson, M. Norman, Jonas Mikelson, Per Jonson Rask and Erik Strandlund asked for and received transfers from the New Stockholm congregation. On June 8, 1897, Pastor Udden was present for the organization meeting and the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church of Percival, Assiniboia, came into being. A. G. Olson served as chairman and P. J. Wickberg, secretary. A Communion Service was held after the meeting during which twenty-three persons communed. Maria and Nels Nelson and Marta Alm were confirmed.

Meeting on January 8, 1898, the congregation decided to build a church and the hope was expressed that it might be under roof by summer. Several factors stalled the plans until April 7, 1899 when definite plans were laid to get the job done. A description of the work reads as follows: "It was decided that the plastering of the church be done in the following way: first, put wooden laths between the timbers, then fill with good clay; smooth the clay, then put wooden laths on the outside. The work of plastering was divided into four contracts, one wall for each contract. It was decided that if any member failed to do his part, he was to pay one dollar for each summer day's work and 50 cents for each winter day's work he failed to help with the plastering."

About fifty miles southeast of Percival was the Fleming area. Here, Pastor P. A. Wenner came in September, 1897, and on the 8th of that month he organized Fridhem congregation. For some time this congregation was in a parish with Percival and New Stockholm. It had a lengthy but chequered career, during which the church building erected in 1901 and valued at \$1,000, was moved across the nearby boundary into Manitoba. Only a lonely cemetery remains. The other two congregations born in 1897 suffered similar fates. Immanuel, Whitemouth, organized with 20 members on September 20, 1897, and aligned in a parish with Kenora, Ontario had a troubled history, succumbing in 1923. An unstable community and problems with religious factions undermined the work. This was the story in many of the tiny congregations which were born during the early years. Almost nothing is known of the Tyndall congregation other than the fact that it was organized in 1897 and dissolved just a few years later.

The first congregations in Alberta, an area that was to prove eventually to be the real strength of Augustana work in Canada, were organized in the year 1898. After five years of virtual abandonment, during which attempts had been made to send students, the Wetaskiwin area received the services of Pastor B. Westerlund. More than 200 Swedish families (most of whom had emigrated from the United States) were reportedly living in the area, now a centre of

Scandinavian emigration. Pastor Westerlund organized Bethlehem Lutheran of Wetaskiwin and 18 miles to the southeast, Svea Lutheran of Battle Creek (Water Glen). These were the first of many congregations to be organized within the boundaries of what is now the Province of Alberta.

The Canadian mission field suffered the loss of her first great home missionary, Pastor Svante Udden, in the same year, 1898. Having spent himself unstintingly in the mission endeavour during those six years he ministered in Canada, Pastor Udden accomplished many great things for the Augustana work. The same year he left, Pastor Udden published a book, "Fran Canada", released by Augustana Book Concern, in which he described his life and adventures in the Canadian north. He made it a primer on Canadian history, government and geography by including a number of brief, but interesting chapters on these subjects. In the preface he expressed the hope that the book would promote better understanding of Canadian Mission problems among Augustana friends in the U.S.A. The book was the first in the Swedish language to be published on the subject of Canada. The loss of Pastor Udden was not felt in his home station of Winnipeg alone, but across the entire field of Augustana missions in Canada. His contribution to the establishment of Augustana work in Canada was immeasurable.

While Canada lost a fine pastor in the person of the Reverend Svante Udden in 1898, this year also marked the beginning of a stream of permanent pastors to come to Canada. The Reverend B. O. Berg arrived in Erickson, Manitoba, to begin work in the Scandinavia settlement. He became the third resident pastor in Canada and spent two short terms, 1898-1901 in Scandinavia, and 1901-1902 in Kenora. The following year, 1899, two more pastors arrived to minister to the vacant congregations, Rev. E. Rehner accepted the call to Winnipeg and Rev. G. S. Larson to Kenora.

At the turn of the century, Canada boasted three resident ministers, ten congregations and a communicant membership of 796. Of the ten congregations, only half could report church buildings. Of these, three were of log construction and two were frame.

### Chapter III

## FROM GREAT LAKES TO PACIFIC

The dawn of the twentieth century revealed the humble beginnings of Augustana's missionary endeavour in Canada. Yet, it was the threshold of a golden decade of advance. The first ten years of the new century proved to be one of the two great periods of growth for the Church. It did not seem so in 1900. The sects were undermining the church's work in congregations which, due to inadequate manpower, were left to tend themselves. Many settlers were easy prey for those who suggested that the inaction of the Church proved that Augustana was indifferent to the spiritual needs of the Swedes in Canada. The Lutheran settlers were not without problems among themselves.

Pastor N. Ohslund traveled throughout the field in March, 1900, and his report of the situation sheds light on some of the difficulties. Ohslund, while serving at Soudan on Minnesota's Vermilion Range, was called to the Canadian field as a permanent worker but had declined because he found it "too expensive to live there". However, he accepted the assignment to make a mission tour and arrived in Winnipeg on March 2nd.

Arriving at Fleming on the third, he "found that the 'Waldenstromians' are trying to make the Lutherans believe that the Synod will take their church if they build one, and that they should build a union church, leaving it open to all preachers. One of the deacons who leads the services has started a Good Templar Lodge and half the congregation has joined. After their meetings they dance." Pastor Ohslund engaged the deacon and other members of the congregation in an earnest discussion after which the men "in the presence of the whole congregation . . . humbled themselves."

Whitewood was next on his agenda. "At the hotel I had a soiled bed and poor food." A Swedish family picked him up in the morning and drove him to Percival. On four successive evenings he conducted worship services during which time he examined the catechetical class, numbering twenty pupils. To his horror he found that only three could read in the *Psalmboek*. In Percival, too, there was dissension, here caused by the Mission Covenant preacher.

He was in the New Stockholm settlement on March 12. While in the community he preached in the church on eight occasions and twice in private homes. He baptized a child, received seven new members into the congregation and visited in the community. (Here Ohslund heard a nasty rumour concerning A. G. Olson, the lay preacher who, although not a member, had devotedly worked for the Augustana Church in Saskatchewan and in Alberta. It was alleged that he "was a man with two wives". The truth of the matter was that he had divorced a wife in Sweden before coming to Canada and had re-married. The effect of this story was to cause a rift between Olson and the Augustana Church which was to last for some years.) Inquiring into the moral life of the congregation, Ohslund "recommended that two deacons be suspended for drunkenness and other sins."

Ohslund also conducted services in Whitewood and Winnipeg, arriving back in Minnesota on March 27th. His expense account is interesting: "Railroad fare, \$25.85; food and lodging, \$1.75; total \$27.60. Collections received, Fleming, \$2.30; Percival, \$2.60; New Stockholm, \$4.65; total \$9.55; balance due from the Conference, \$18.05."

While Pastor Ohslund was making his tour of Assiniboia and Manitoba, significant developments were taking place in Alberta. Pastor Eric Rehner, on leave from his congregation at Winnipeg, was working with Catechist A. G. Olson who had been called for a period of six months to work in this vast western province. On March 9, 1900, the First Swedish Lutheran Church of Calgary was organized under Pastor Rehner's guidance. Now, Augustana had a foothold in what was then Alberta's only city, important as a hub for immigration even as Winnipeg had been a decade before. The congregation issued a request to the land commissioner for building lots, but in the end purchased in October of that year a Baptist church building which was to be the congregation's home for many years. The church and equipment with two lots was acquired for \$1,000.

The spiritual distress which Ohslund encountered in the east, Rehner and Olson encountered similarly in the west. They arrived at Svea Church, Battle Lake, only to discover the congregation near dissolution and preparing to go over to the Mission Covenant Church. The keen rivalry of the times is reflected in Rehner's comment: "Catechist A. G. Olson and I came at just the right time to prevent such a fatal step." Rehner recognized the importance of building a church and consolidating the work on this important field. Pastor Rehner told Conference officials: "Unless one or two pastors are secured for this area there is a danger that it will be so damaged by sects and parties that it will not be possible to accomplish anything when they do come."

Towards the fall of the year, Student W. Vetell was sent to work in the Wetaskiwin parish. Unfortunately, he encountered circumstances which shrouded his work in pessimism. Even though he had the joy of organizing Bethel Church of Burnt Lake on January 15, 1901, he wrote to Pastor Fremling in July of the same year, "I am tired of this field. In Alberta, there are scarcely ten persons who are fully devoted to our work as it is now organized." Vetell's opinion was shared by at least one visitor to the region. Sent on a mission visit to Wetaskiwin, Pastor John A. Levine returned with scant praise for the people and the work. He got off to a bad start when no one met him at the railroad station. "After seven sorrows and eight difficulties I got hold of a Baptist and got a ride in an old lumber wagon most of the way. When he did not want to drive any farther I took my satchel and used the 'apostle's horses'." He found the Baptists active in the colony of humble cattle ranchers, and was critical of their prosletysing. His opinion of the country and its climate was low. "It is too bad about our Swedish people who are lured up to these regions. It has rained all the time . . . Last evening a severe snowstorm began and it has snowed all night so that the ground today (June 4) is covered with snow six inches deep. Today, the people say that the land agents ought to be strung up by their big toes. But, when the snow has melted they think this is the most wonderful country in America." Then Pastor Levine gives us an indication of missionary Vetell's predicament. "What does the Executive Committee mean by not sending Vetell anything on his salary? He lives in a little attic, a veritable shack, with a bed nailed together of rough boards. Unpleasant in every way."

Strikingly at odds with the attitude of Vetell and the report of Pastor Levine is the word from Rev. H. S. Chilgren of Englund, Minnesota, who visited the field from September 25 to November 6, 1901, following Vetell's return to the U.S. All this helps to show the diverse opinions concerning the work in Alberta, which were held at that time.

Chilgren, after brief stops in Calgary and Wetaskiwin, continued on to Edmonton following an itinerary set up by Vetell. In the capital city he looked up some old friends from the States. This was only a social call for no work was being done here at the time, but he did conduct a baptism. Returning to

Wetaskiwin he began a busy round of activities. Traveling by horse and wagon, he held services in the schoolhouse at Crooked Lake, ten miles northeast of Wetaskiwin, in Bethel Church, Burnt Lake, fifteen miles west of Red Deer, and in Wetaskiwin and Battle Lake congregations. On the eve of his departure for the States he conducted a service in First Church, Calgary. He told the Committee, "The work in Alberta is too much for one man to care for. There is need of at least two good, faithful workers now and more as the field develops. Immigration increases every year and many of our people are streaming in there from the old country and from the U.S. The spiritual conditions are not quite as bad as Vetell described them. On every field that I visited I found some who were serious-minded Christians, tried and tested in the school of the cross . . ." At the close of his report he submitted the following expense account: "Total expenses for fare, lodging and meals, \$40.50. Collections at 10 services and two baptisms, \$23.50; balance, \$17.00. I have nothing coming from the Conference. That much I want to do for the mission cause."

In response to yet another appeal from men to labour in the mission field, the Executive Committee extended five calls; all were declined.

Then, there appeared on the scene a man who was to have a whirl-wind ministry in the Alberta region. Through the efforts of this man Augustana's constituency in the province was to increase. The Reverend Per Almgren accepted the call to become Field Missionary in Alberta with headquarters at Wetaskiwin. He moved to the province in the spring of 1902 and began a blessed and fruitful ministry which was to end abruptly in tragedy.

Pastor Almgren wasted no time, immediately setting out to visit the various Swedish communities which had sprung up everywhere. There were now five established congregations in Alberta, since Pastor A. J. Ryden organized Saron congregation of Valley City on August 8, 1901. These tiny young churches needed strengthening and encouragement. Pastor Almgren did his best to build upon the work begun by his predecessors. In Calgary, he encountered a crisis on his very first visit. A Presbyterian minister had taken over the church and Almgren found it necessary to send him packing. At Bittern Lake he discovered that Tabor Lutheran Church, which had come into being August 26, 1901, through the efforts of Student Vetell had not been properly organized.

Pastor Almgren met with them on July 21, 1902, and organized "Fridhem Church" of Bittern Lake (now Camrose). This was the first of seven churches he was to organize during the four eventful years of his ministry. Per Almgren was alone in Alberta where the number of Swedes was estimated to be 10,000, of whom only 175 had joined the Augustana congregations. He found seven Norwegian Lutheran pastors working in the field and rejoiced that some of the Swedes had joined Norwegian congregations, for he said, "We ought to be glad that others are gathering in the harvest, when we are not able to do it."

It wasn't long before Pastor Almgren appealed to the Conference Executive for help and suggested Axel Eriksson, a son of the Rev. E. M. Eriksson in Worthington, Minnesota. "He is a good, humble young man, with exceptionally good ability as a speaker . . . It is unusual to find a young man of his age so deeply interested in missions." Student Eriksson was sent and proved to be an able assistant to Pastor Almgren.

Of the seven congregations organized by Pastor Almgren, only one survives today. The fact that the congregations were organized solely for Swedes and in sparsely settled regions at a time when the population was constantly shifting contributed to the low survival rate. Organized in 1903, the Swedish Ev. Lutheran congregation at Calmar began with a charter membership of eight, grew to a baptized membership of 65, and in 1908 boasted the largest Augustana church building in Alberta. Yet, the next decade saw its demise. In 1904, the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Davids congregation of Stettler was organized

under Almgren's leadership. This congregation was turned over to the American Lutheran Church when the Swedish population diminished. In 1905, Pastor Almgren organized Dalby congregation at Falun, 23 miles west of Wetaskiwin, among a settlement of Swedish-Finns. The Synod of Western Canada of the United Lutheran Church in America now serves the field. Twenty miles southwest of Wetaskiwin, he organized Twin Creek, "Usona" congregation at Bear Lake (Brightview). As fast as the people moved in they moved out again, searching for better farm land. Only ten acres of land and a "Swedish Lutheran Cemetery" remains as evidence of the work at Brightview.

Among the first white people to settle in this area were the parents of the late Mrs. Beda Hanna of Wetaskiwin. Before the establishment of a congregation, Mrs. Hanna recalled, "Mother would send us children out to cut down pine branches. Then we cut them into small pieces and scattered them on the dirt floor of our log hut so that it would smell clean and fresh for Sunday. Mother conducted a type of Sunday School for us, instructing us in the catechism and Bible history. When father was home, he read a sermon by Luther every Sunday and led in singing hymns."

The year 1905 marked the arrival of the first resident pastor in Alberta, the Rev. L. J. Fihn. He came to serve the Calgary congregation but assisted Pastor Almgren in the mission program. It was he who presided at the organization meetings of two new congregations in southern Alberta. On October 2, 1905, the Swedish Ev. Lutheran Swedeholm congregation of Claresholm was established. This congregation of 15 communicants and 10 children met in a schoolhouse. On November 11, 1906, the Swedish Ev. Salem congregation of Stavely was organized. There 17 communicants and 13 children also met in a schoolhouse. Unfortunately, monthly visits from the Calgary pastor proved to be insufficient to keep these congregations alive; both died in their infancy.

The last congregation to be organized by Pastor Almgren before he died was that of Meeting Creek. On January 10, 1906, the Meeting Creek Emanuel congregation of Edberg Post Office was born.

Just a few weeks later, on February 19, after a round of preaching engagements Pastor Almgren met with an accident. He had just completed a service at Pigeon Lake where he had preached on the text "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." — 2. Cor. 5:1. This was his last sermon. The hymn he chose for the congregation to sing was Hemlandssangen 436, "My home I seek, and homeward here I journey." Leaving the church by horse rig, accompanied by Mr. August Eriksson, a layman from Wetaskiwin, they traveled the country road through a stretch of woods. Here some homesteaders were felling trees. Without warning one of the trees sped downward crashing on to the wagon, leaving Eriksson and the horses unharmed, but striking Pastor Almgren a deadly blow. Only two faint pulse-beats were felt before his life was extinguished. At midnight they reached home with the remains which were carried into the church, and they then informed Mrs. Almgren of the tragedy. He was laid to rest outside the walls of Fridhem Church. Pastor Almgren was the first Augustana pastor to be buried in the soil of Canada. He was only 42 years old when he died. His wife continued to work in Wetaskiwin, actively engaging herself in the Sunday School and women's program of the vacant congregation. The homesteader who wielded the fateful axe was sincerely upset over the event, a fact which tended to suppress early rumours that the unhappy accident was in reality a deliberate act.

The Reverend Olaf Lindgren, who had previously served in Alberta as a student, was ordained in 1906 and became Almgren's successor. He was the first pastor to remain in Canada for the entire length of his ministry. He also enjoyed

the distinction of being the first pastor to stay in the country for a period longer than six years. Up until this time the average term was about two and one-half years. Called to the Camrose parish, Rev. Lindgren took up where Pastor Almgren left off. In 1908, he organized two new congregations, Zion of Westerose, and Wilhelmina of Lundemo (Hay Lakes). Alberta now counted fifteen Augustana congregations. Among those ministering faithfully to the churches in Alberta were three students, C. A. Leaf, Axel Eriksson and H. O. Sellin.

Even before the birth of the two last-mentioned congregations, the Alberta pastors and people felt the desire to organize and to apply for Mission District status in the Minnesota Conference. On May 13, 1908, in Saron Church of Valley City (Clive), the three pastors and lay representatives of the fifteen existing congregations met and organized the Alberta District. Pastor Lindgren became the first president. In October of the same year, the new district was officially welcomed into the Minnesota Conference. The three pastors in Alberta were the aforementioned Fihn and Lindgren and newly-arrived Pastor J. J. Frodeen who had been called to Wetaskiwin. Frodeen had been president of Gustavus Adolphus College, 1872-1874, and had a distinguished ministry in Minnesota, so he was joyfully welcomed to Alberta where he worked faithfully until his death on October 12, 1912.

Mission activity was not restricted to Alberta. Pastors were beginning to heed the call to service in Canada and in 1903 no less than three men came to the mission field—N. Lehart to Stockholm, K. Rosenthal to Erickson and A. G. Olson to Kenora. New congregations were being organized, not in such swift succession as in Alberta, but congregations which on the average would last longer. Danvers congregation in the neighborhood of Scandinavia was organized in 1901, and a small chapel erected there was dedicated by Pastor J. O. Lundberg who was on a two month Canadian tour. The Danvers congregation, in 1910, united with Bethlehem Church of Erickson (Scandinavia), forming one congregation with two preaching points.

In the year that Saskatchewan became a province of Canada, 1905, two congregations were brought into being within its boundaries. On December 7, Pastor N. Lehart journeyed 20 miles northwest of New Stockholm to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Anton Berg where he assisted in the organization of the New Sweden congregation of Dubuc. All the members had just recently come from Sweden with the exception of a few from the U.S.A. Services were conducted in the Fridholm schoolhouse and the Presbyterian church. Down in southern Saskatchewan, Alberta missionary Per Almgren while visiting at the home of John Fryklund at Archive, south of Moose Jaw, organized Fryksande congregation. Two years later, a small congregation at Parkman was organized but little is known of developments there.

Two significant congregations were born in Ontario in 1906. A considerable number of Swedes had been moving to the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William on Lake Superior. Pastors A. G. Olson and J. D. Nelsenius visited the centres in 1905 and upon ordination in 1906, Pastor N. E. Sjogren came to gather, organize and tend the flocks in that vicinity. As Conference missionary, Pastor Sjogren arrived in Port Arthur on July 5, 1906. He found militant opposition among the sects which had invaded the cities and were doing their utmost to influence the newcomers away from the Lutheran Church. Nevertheless, he succeeded in organizing Immanuel congregation at Port Arthur on July 18, and Zion congregation at Fort William on July 29. These congregations formed the eastern front of the Canada mission.

Away out on the far western flank of Canada, Swedes had been congregating in the cities and villages among the forests and mountains of British Columbia. The climate and fishing, lumbering, mining industries attracted Scandinavians.

It was none other than Pastor Svante Udden who "discovered" the west coast province for Augustana. In his book, "Fran Canada", Pastor Udden described the first Augustana mission journey to this area, made in the year 1898 while he was still pastor at Winnipeg.

He began his journey in early April following the Canadian Pacific Railway line to the coast. He stopped in the mountain-ringed town of Field where he had been told there was a settlement of his countrymen. "After I had breakfast at a restaurant, I looked up the post office which was connected with a trading post. There were some people in the store who to all appearances were Swedes. I did not address them, however, but waited to hear them talk. The silence was broken by an oath, after which there was again silence . . . The oath was spoken in pure Swedish and it was one of those coarse oaths which I had never heard spoken in any other language. When I addressed the one who had sworn and explained who I was, he immediately laid away his oaths and began decent conversation. He expressed the wish that I would come to his home and baptize his little children. Because of the distance . . . this could not be done, but his concern plainly indicated that in spite of his ungodliness he still had respect for God's commandments and holy things." He found twenty Swedes, among whom were two families. All the men were employees of the railroad. He found loneliness and liquor main problems among these hardy Swedes separated from the influence of home and church.

He arrived at the west coast terminal of the C.P.R., Vancouver, and immediately began to seek out people of Swedish background. He lodged in a hotel run by and for Swedes. He arranged for a meeting-place and then began to publicize the service, calling at three Swedish rooming houses where labourers congregated. The service was held in a church belonging to some Norwegian Lutherans. "Some years before a Swedish preacher had visited the place. He was one of those independent fellows who would have nothing to do with a synodical connection. After working there for some time he had been compelled to go elsewhere and his congregation dispersed. A number of these Swedes had later joined the Norwegian Church but most of them were without any church." He was told that the estimated Scandinavian population of the city was four hundred, although this figure was changed substantially by the ebb and flow of tides of seamen and labourers who were not permanent residents. "This is a place where it would be desirable for our synod to begin work," suggested Pastor Udden. "A small congregation would easily enough be established, but it would not soon be strong enough to support its own pastor."

Five years later Pastor Udden's recommendation was realized. Among the settlers were many who missed their own church, and these made arrangements for visits from Pastor G. A. Anderson of LaConner, Washington. He first visited Vancouver on November 10, 1903, and found such a great interest in the establishment of a congregation that he laid plans for an early realization of the people's desires. The First Swedish Lutheran Church of Vancouver, B.C., was organized on December 10th with 34 people on the charter roll.

Early in 1904, the congregation decided to buy a lot and build a church. Organizations were formed; the Sunday school began to function. The work of Pastor Anderson was followed up by that of a lay-preacher, Mr. S. D. Hawkins. The sum of \$1,265 was invested in a building site fifty feet by sixty feet. Mr. Hawkins did not limit his work to the congregation in Vancouver, but travelled about the Lower Mainland in an attempt to seek out large settlements of Swedes. His search proved fruitless. Pastor G. A. Anderson was sent by the Columbia Conference to visit Golden, Revelstoke and Notch Hill in 1904. A congregation of fifteen communicants and ten children was organized at Golden.

An important milestone was passed in 1905 when the first resident Augustana pastor in B.C. arrived to take up his task as minister to the little flock at

Vancouver. The Rev. C. Rupert Swanson played a vital role in the development of Augustana work in British Columbia. During his ministry the first Augustana church building in B.C. was erected on the corner of Dunlevy and Pender Streets. Dedicated on August 29, 1905, the church which seated one hundred was filled to overflowing with members and guests, among whom were the mayor of Vancouver, a Mr. Buscombe, and members of the city council.

In March 1907, Pastor Swanson left Vancouver and the following year Student S. H. Swanson was engaged by the Columbia Conference to visit and survey communities in the southeastern part of the province. Pastors J. A. Bernard and Chr. Swenson was called to serve this area as home missionaries but both declined. The problem of getting pastors to come to Canada was not limited to the prairie regions.

In 1906, Tabor Lutheran Church of Mabel Lake was organized. Little is known of this congregation which reported twenty-four communicants in 1909. On October 1, 1909, Pastor J. A. Levin came to B.C. He conducted services and organized Sunday schools and Ladies' Aids at Nelson and Phoenix. He also visited communities on or near the border including Grand Forks, Greenwood, Cowlitz, Republic, North Port, Deep Creek and Revelstoke.

The second Lower Mainland congregation to be organized was Immanuel Lutheran Church of New Westminister, B.C. As early as 1906 a Ladies' Aid had been organized in the river port by seven women who were anxious to see a Lutheran Church established there. On April 14, 1909, Dr. C. R. Swanson, recently returned to Vancouver to shepherd the flock there once more, presided at an organization meeting. Ten men and women became charter members. The little group decided to build a church, and the original building twenty feet by thirty-eight feet was erected at a cost of \$595 by members of the congregation under the leadership of Mr. Gus Melin.

Meanwhile, in Vancouver, the congregation was growing to the extent that it was necessary for them to think of building a new church home. For \$15,000 a strategic lot at the corner of Princess and Pender Streets was purchased. This was located in the heart of the East Hastings Swedish district. Work began on the church on March 10, 1910, the cornerstone laid on June 10, and the building dedicated on December 11. It was an impressive building seating 750 with an overflow capacity of 1,000. It was for many years the largest Lutheran church building on the Lower Mainland, and the largest Augustana church building in Canada.

The work at Golden apparently came to a standstill in 1910. Other than at New Westminister and Vancouver, Augustana work in B.C. was ended. Evidently the prevailing problem of the mobility of the Swedes in the settlements of southeastern B.C. contributed to their dissolution. In 1915, the Columbia Conference heard hopefully concerning the opening of a new mission in Prince Rupert on the far north coast near the Alaskan panhandle. Pastor J. A. Levin was sent there and reported, "It is a difficult field and yet a field of the future." The work in this northern fishing and lumbering centre was interrupted by the Great War and was never reopened. Pastor Carl G. Zaar, who had come in 1915 to serve the two congregations on the Lower Mainland attempted to minister to Swedes at Hammond and Britannia Beach, but these fields were soon abandoned. Not until the 1940's was any further mission work attempted in British Columbia.

Thus from east to west Augustana's gospel mission was expanding despite many setbacks and problems.

## *Chapter IV*

### THE CANADA CONFERENCE

The possibility of a Canadian Conference being organized out of the scattered Augustana congregations in the Dominion seems never to have been considered before 1912. At least there is no record of anyone entertaining such a notion. When the idea was presented, it met with mixed reception. The period from 1909 to 1913 proved vital to the eventual organization of the Canada Conference. It was the coming of the Rev. L. P. Bergstrom of Winthrop, Minnesota, as Mission Superintendent in July, 1909, that heralded the beginning of this period.

Bergstrom and Dr. J. A. Krantz, Minnesota Conference president, had made a mission journey through the prairie provinces of Canada in 1906. They concluded that there was need for one man to oversee and organize the work in the Canadian mission field. The Conference agreed and called Pastor Bergstrom at a salary of \$1,000 plus \$200 for housing and all expenses. He declined, indicating that the terms of the call were unsatisfactory. In 1909 the call was again extended to Pastor Bergstrom, but this time he accepted. He arrived in Winnipeg that summer and threw himself into the work with such vigour that his presence was soon felt everywhere in the Canadian field. A determined, aggressive individualist, he was to make many staunch friends and equally many critics in his outstanding career in Canada.

Under the leadership of Pastor Bergstrom great strides were made in the planting of new missions. A period of dramatic growth began with the establishment of the Superintendency; the number of congregations was doubled, the number of pastors more than doubled, the number of communicants trebled! Great credit must be given Pastor Bergstrom for his tireless efforts during the years he traveled about the provinces. He overlooked no opportunity. In the Winnipeg Free Press Prairie Farmer, a popular weekly, he advertised, inviting Swedes to communicate with him if they were interested in organizing a congregation.

His report to the Minnesota Conference in 1910 demonstrated the staggering amount of work he was doing. He had traveled 12,093 miles by rail, 1,000 by horse, and numberless miles on foot with his knapsack on his back. He pointed out that there were only six pastors and one traveling missionary for twelve parishes spread out from Edmonton, Alberta, to Port Arthur, Ontario. He demanded six more men immediately. He told of ravaging sects supported by "American gold" who freely admitted that their goal was to destroy the Lutheran congregations. Bergstrom reminded the Conference that the Swedes in Canada were not familiar with a free Lutheran Church. He said, "It should be mentioned also that the sects in Sweden have undermined in many people the confidence in the Lutheran Church so that many are hesitant and the young bitterly inimical to religion." These problems raised many difficulties for the establishment of Augustana work in the Dominion and would do so for some time to come.

He recommended the dissolution of Tyndall and reported that Stavely and Claresholm were verging on extinction due to a thinning of the population. He could report, however, that a congregation at Kipling, Saskatchewan had been organized and that the work in Scandinavia, Manitoba, had been revived.

In this latter place the people had joined with members at Danvers, purchased ten acres of land near Erickson station and were planning the erection of a parsonage.

Attending the annual meeting at Fleming, Saskatchewan, Pastor Bergstrom recommended that the congregation join with Percival in calling a pastor. The salary seemed a stumbling block until the Superintendent came up with a suggestion. His recommendation was adopted. Men of the congregation brought their ploughs and broke up thirty-five of the forty acres which the congregation had received from the government. They planted flax. It proved to be a bountiful crop, enabling them to pay their share of the pastor's salary and their responsibility to Synod. Encouraged, the farmers at Fleming continued the practice in succeeding years, and the parish eventually became self-supporting.

In 1911, Pastor Bergstrom reported to Conference the organization of six new congregations. The Superintendent had presided at the organization of Zion, Kinistino; Bethel, Kelliher; and Ebenezer, Net of Lakes (Wadena), all in the province of Saskatchewan. A tiny congregation at Inwood in Manitoba had also been organized by him. In Alberta, Pastor O. Lindgren had guided the establishment of congregations at Czar (Immanuel), and Amisk (Bethania). The hopes for establishment of work in the city of Lethbridge were abandoned when a drought brought about an exodus of the population.

The organization of the congregation at Kinistino presents an interesting story. A Mr. Carl Hagglund had read about Pastor Bergstrom in a newspaper and dispatched a letter to the missionary. Finally, the pastor was able to visit the settlement and preached to a gathering in the home of Carl Hagglund's brother. Bergstrom was told of a settlement six miles away where the people had already built a church and organized a congregation of sorts. He traveled through the largely uninhabited bush country until he came upon a church building of Swedish design. The people gathered readily and eagerly for worship. He learned that most of the people had come from Marshall County, Minnesota, where "Father J. O. Johansson" had been a prominent member in one of the Augustana congregations. It was Johansson who had led them to build the church and who had arranged for a Norwegian pastor, T. A. Johnson, to come and preach to them whenever it was possible for him to do so. Pastor Johnson had assisted them in setting up a formal organization and constitution. Now that the congregation had made contact with the Augustana Church through Pastor Bergstrom they were brought into the Minnesota Conference.

It was during the period of 1908 to 1915 that the highest rate of immigration from Sweden was recorded; 14,813 Swedes were recorded entering Canada by the Immigration Department. The flood of new immigrants resulted in increased and vigorous activity of the part of the sects. Pastor Bergstrom, greatly disturbed, told the Conference meeting in 1911, "The sects have missionaries, both men and women, who meet every train that comes into the station . . . hand out their publications, leaflets and periodicals to our people. At the same time they direct them to their churches and meeting places. It is no doubt true that the majority of these workers, if not to say all, are supported by different Canadian and American denominations. But, we have no such representatives to remind the newcomer of our Church and of the Word of God which endures . . ."

While it may have seemed that the Church was losing out in its witness to the Manitoba capital, the story was different in Saskatchewan. Four more congregations were organized that year. They included, Salem, Young; Elim, Waldeck; Swedish Lutheran, Marchwell; and Libanon, Gull Lake. In the latter place, work was being done by Pastor K. J. Bring who had come to the field, not as a pastor but as a homesteader, and was serving voluntarily. Eventually, he was received into the Conference ministerium and contributed a faithful

ministry in southern Saskatchewan. Another Augustana pastor brought his family to Saskatchewan taking land to homestead in the neighbourhood of Dundurn. Pastor P. A. Edquist was setting up his farm when a call came to serve the Stockholm-Percival-Fleming parish and he gave up his plans to accept the church's call. In 1912, fifty communicants mostly from Wheaton, Minnesota, organized Emanuel, Assiniboia.

A very disturbing development came to light at the Minnesota Conference Convention in 1912. Evidently there was severe disagreement in the higher echelons of the Conference concerning the future development of work in Canada. On the one hand stood the resolute figure of Pastor Bergstrom; on the other, the Conference president, Dr. Krantz and the executive committee. What brought this unhappy state of affairs about were two issues introduced the previous year, the proposals for a publication and a school for Canada. Pastor Bergstrom had supported both these proposals since the inception of his work as mission superintendent; they may even have originated with him. However, he had very definite opinions as to how these proposals should be carried out. The committee appointed by the Conference in 1911 to study the matter were at odds with Pastor Bergstrom. After much discussion a vote was taken and the committee's report accepted. However, the surprising outcome of the committee's report was the resolution "that the Conference encourages the pastors and congregations in Canada to organize themselves as a Conference as soon as possible". This was a most unexpected turn of events. A third resolution charged the Conference president with the responsibility of calling together pastors and representatives in Canada for a meeting, to consider the "school and publications together with other important questions having to do with church work and activity."

The proposition to organize a Canada Conference came surprisingly suddenly and the way in which it was introduced was strange. To this day no one is able to tell whether the idea originated with pastors in Canada who collaborated on the special committee or with the Minnesota Conference executive. And the suggestion seemed ill-timed since Dr. Krantz had just recommended the refusal of congregations in the west to organize a Red River Valley Conference saying, "It is no doubt best that this matter is postponed until a number of areas may develop and a natural arrangement result. Nothing will be lost by this but much may be won. For this part to cut themselves off into a conference of their own would simply mean to cut themselves off from resources and support which it so much needs . . ." Every word of this statement was doubly true in the case of Canada. The area of which he was speaking had twenty-six pastors, ninety congregations and 6,632 communicants. Canada had only six pastors, thirty congregations and 677 communicants. It seems inconceivable that the executive of the Minnesota Conference could have regarded Canada as better prospects for a Conference than the Red River Valley area. This was likely Pastor Bergstrom's argument. He opposed the plan, but the Conference resolutions were carried out.

On July 25 to 28, 1912, in Percival, Saskatchewan, pastors and representatives of the congregations in Canada were called together. The only pastor absent was Dr. Frodeen, who was ill. During the discussion the first hint of Canadian nationalism emerged. Dr. Krantz reported, "During this exchange of opinion it was seen that the situation and conditions on the other side of the border are peculiar to the provinces and the government under which they live. Whatever is not Canadian has for them a foreign and uninteresting stamp and this is true of our church activities there, as long as they are carried on from outside."

There seemed to be unanimity of opinion regarding the organization of a Conference. It was suggested that autonomy might assist the Canadian churches

and membership toward greater responsibility and participation in the work. One of the problems that worried the delegates, however, was the financial implications of such autonomy. President Krantz assured them that the Conference would carry its resolution to grant \$5,000 to the new Conference the first year, and assist them until the fledgling organization was on its feet. With this promise, the delegation proceeded to vote. There was no negative vote, but a number of opponents to the plan abstained from voting, among these, Pastor Bergstrom. A petition was prepared reading, "That the Swedish Lutheran congregations in Canada (British Columbia excepted) enjoin the Minnesota Conference with the request for the right to organize its own Conference and with the promise of being accepted into the Augustana Synod." The petition was accompanied, as could be expected under the circumstances, by a protest from Pastor Bergstrom. Dr. Krantz in reporting this to the 1913 Conference meeting expressed his sorrow over this clash of opinions saying, ". . . this opposition comes from a source where you might have expected otherwise . . . and this is so much more since the intention never was to harm but to encourage and help advance our church's activity in Canada . . ."

When Superintendent Bergstrom's opportunity came, he announced that twenty-four of thirty-one congregations in Canada had sent a request with him that they might remain within the Minnesota Conference. He further stated that the Alberta District had, at its annual meeting, voted to remain within the Minnesota Conference until greater stability was possible and more pastors were available for the work. It was apparent that the mission congregations were lining up with Pastor Bergstrom, and the self-sustaining congregations with the Minnesota Conference executive. The split was most unfortunate. In an effort to defend himself against the criticism that the work in Canada was in a rut, he told the Conference in convention assembled, "The work has altogether changed. Instead of the Conference calling and paying missionaries, Alberta has divided into parishes which call their own pastors and contribute about three-fourths of their salary. In Saskatchewan, the Percival parish is self-supporting; New Stockholm, likewise. The number of congregations has doubled in three years . . . Eight churches have been built or are being built . . . Locations or sites for churches and parsonages have been provided in eleven congregations . . . Three parsonages have been built and two schools are being built at the first opportunity. These are some of the results which have been attained in the mission field these last three years . . . With all this before us, I cannot understand how anyone can insist that we are in a rut and getting nowhere. To insist in this way bears witness to a lack of information or prejudice in the matter."

Pastor Bergstrom's valiant attempt to forestall the Conference's action on the petition failed. The Convention voted appreciation for his outstanding work in Canada, but ignored his pleas to postpone organization of a Canadian Conference. He returned to Alberta after his defeat in the convention arena. The Conference resolved, "That the Conference accepts the petition that has come from the meeting at Percival and recommends that the new Conference be received into membership of the Synod as soon as it has completed organization."

In surveying the history of the Canada Conference from the vantage point of today, it is difficult to determine whether or not the time was ripe for the establishment of a Canadian Conference. Both Dr. Krantz and Pastor Bergstrom were definitely convinced that theirs was the wisest course. It is impossible to tell who was right. Perhaps, to some degree, both were right. At any rate, the bitter controversy was over and it was the responsibility of all concerned to carry out the decisions of the Conference to the best of their ability and for the glory of God and the extension of His Kingdom.

On Saturday, May 23, 1913, the pastors and delegates of the Canadian

churches met at New Stockholm Lutheran Church in Saskatchewan, to begin meetings which would result in the organization of the Canada Conference. Dr. P. A. Mattson had succeeded Dr. Krantz as Minnesota Conference president so he was present to represent the interest of the mother Conference. Dr. Mattson took the chair at the first meeting. The minutes taken at the meetings reflect the joy and hope which prevailed during those eventful days. The assembled delegates recognized the seriousness of the business at hand and deliberated with courage and conviction. The delegation consisted of the following pastors and laymen: Winnipeg: Pastor J. G. Dahlberg, Mr. P. Nelson; Kenora: Pastor J. O. Lindquist, Mr. R. Peterson; Port Arthur: Pastor F. E. Olson; Stockholm: Pastor P. A. Edquist, Mr. P. J. Selin; Percival: Pastor C. Thunberg, Mr. P. J. Wickberg; Fleming: Mr. J. A. Linner; Dubuc: Mr. J. N. Forsberg; Gull Lake: Mr. B. H. Backlund; Kinistino: Mr. Carl Hagglund; Mission Superintendent: Pastor L. P. Bergstrom.

Pastors and delegates from Alberta were conspicuous by their absence. It has been suggested that there was some "confusion" with regard to this meeting, but it was evident from the record that their absence is best explained as a protest against the proceedings. The only pastors in Alberta at this time were O. Lindgren and O. B. Nelson.

Pastor P. A. Edquist was elected secretary. A constitution, admirably drawn up by a committee headed by Pastor J. G. Dahlberg of Winnipeg, was presented and discussed point by point. A school committee and a constitution revision committee were elected. When the convention resumed in the afternoon, Pastor J. G. Dahlberg of Winnipeg was elected the first president of the Canada Conference. One of the ministerial delegates present, the Rev. Claes Thunberg remarks: "A better man than Dahlberg for the first year of the Conference would have been difficult to find." Pastor Edquist was elected Conference vice-president and Pastor C. Thunberg, secretary and archivist. A motion was made to petition for admission to the Synod.

Sunday intervened. A memorable Communion Service was held in the morning, followed by a festive dinner prepared by the ladies of the New Stockholm church and served in the out-of-doors. The informal discussion on matters of faith and life which began spontaneously after the meal is recorded as having been an inspiring and unforgettable experience for all concerned.

At nine o'clock Monday morning, the delegates were assembled again. Messrs. K. J. Lundgren of Marchwell and J. Kron of Kenora were elected to the Conference executive committee. District boundary lines were discussed and the Conference was divided into three areas, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba-Ontario. A decision was made to call and assign a field missionary for each District. The president and the secretary were commissioned to attend the Synod meeting to bring the petitions from the new Conference before the Church.

At the afternoon meeting a School Committee was elected consisting of pastors J. G. Dahlberg, L. P. Bergstrom, and P. A. Edquist with laymen, P. G. Wickberg, K. J. Lundgren and J. A. Linner. The Conference publication question was discussed and a "Tidnings-kommitté" was elected. Pastors Dahlberg and Bergstrom and laymen Kron and Nelson made up this committee. The Conference organization meeting was adjourned.

In the evening, a musical program was presented in the church and an offering (\$30.00) taken up for the Conference school. Thus, the eventful meeting was brought to a close. At organization, the Canada Conference counted thirty-nine congregations, eight pastors and 2,938 baptized members (1,756 communicants).

## *Chapter V*

### TWIN CONTROVERSIES

Two proposals engaged the interest and imagination of Augustana Lutherans in Canada and were the subject of controversy in the years prior to and following the organization of the Conference. They were the establishment of a church school and the publication of a church paper. Because these matters are so significant in the history of the Canada Conference, a detailed story is presented here. Although this is a distressing chapter in the history of Augustana's work in Canada, it helps to serve as a contrast to future happier times.

#### A. THE SCHOOL QUESTION

The need for a school operated by the Church in Canada was recognized as early as during the ministry of Pastor Svante Udden. He saw in his own congregation at Winnipeg the need for an institution of learning capable of providing the youth of Canada with a good Christian education and preparing them for leadership in the congregations. It was not until Pastor L. P. Bergstrom became Mission Superintendent, however, that the attention of the Minnesota Conference was drawn to the matter.

In 1909, Pastor Bergstrom visited Saskatoon where the University of Saskatchewan had just been established. The University offered a free site for a church-related college. However, one of the conditions of the gift was that the University would determine the structure of the new school buildings. The native sandstone used in the erection of the University buildings was tremendously expensive and it was quite obvious that the church was not at all able to make so great an investment. Had Augustana been in a position to accept the offer and establish the first Lutheran college in western Canada, it might have changed the complexion of future events.

Pastor Bergstrom did not lose hope for the eventual establishment of a school in Canada. He continued to campaign for the proposal. The Minnesota Conference was sympathetic and the Conference president, Dr. Krantz said, "If we are to progress and gain a firm foothold within the provinces we need a school in the Dominion . . . We need young men in the work there who are raised in Canada, who can understand and sympathize thoroughly with the spirit and national characteristics and who therefore have more in common with the people than is the case with men that come from the United States . . . We may use great sums of money as we please and yet find that the real goal is not reached until the work there has its own native foundation and institutions."

Already the Synod was becoming conscious of the importance of an indigenous ministry for Canada. The Minnesota Conference in 1911, acting on the president's remarks, "urged the brethren in Canada to establish a school there." Pastor Bergstrom felt that a resolution was not enough; a committee ought to be organized and some actual planning done. His pleas before the Conference went unheeded. It was not until a year later that action was taken and this was prompted by efforts of the Baptist Church. A Baptist school, "Brandon College", had sent for and received a student from Sweden. It was the intention of the college to establish a new "Upsala" in this western Manitoba city of Brandon. The young man was assigned to teach the Swedish language

and to travel about the prairies giving lectures, soliciting offerings and recruiting students. The young Swede made a successful tour through a number of Augustana parishes. Percival was one of the congregations visited. When the matter reached Pastor Bergstrom's ears, he was deeply disturbed, especially when he learned that funds and students were forthcoming from Augustana churches. He asked Student O. E. Olmon who was serving Percival at the time, if he would start a school for the young people in his congregation who desired it. He hoped in this way to keep them within the influence of the Lutheran Church. Olmon accepted the assignment, and began to hunt up suitable quarters for the institution. He located a small room which was available during certain hours of the day and announced the establishment of the school. Enrolment taxed the accommodation so that some had to be turned away! When Dr. Krantz heard about this he arranged for a meeting with the pastors manning the Canadian field to be held in Kenora, Ontario, October 10, 1911.

Meanwhile, Pastor Bergstrom had not ceased to work on the matter. He scouted around for a suitable location for a permanent institution and settled on Yorkton, a town almost 100 miles north of Percival. The city fathers, eager to see the establishment of such a school in their growing community, offered four locations including a gift of twenty acres of land. The city further offered free haulage of sand and gravel as well as leveling of the ground. Water and sewer connections were promised. If the Conference built the school in Yorkton, the council promised to raise up to \$40,000 for its construction. Pastor Bergstrom was more than delighted with the deal, and documents were drawn up with a period of sixty days for consideration.

Pastor Bergstrom's investigations and recommendations were studied by a committee of three pastors, J. G. Dahlberg (Winnipeg), P. Edquist (Stockholm) and H. Olander (Minnesota). They visited Yorkton in this connection, but for some reason or other they were hesitant to go along with the plan and reported this to Dr. Krantz at the meeting in Kenora. Out of this meeting came the recommendation that Winnipeg, not Yorkton, was the proper location for a school. The committee's recommendations were adopted and the decision was to erect a small school in Winnipeg as soon as possible and that funds be gathered for the purpose.

Pastor Bergstrom was dauntless. Over against the recommendations of the committee, he spelled out his plan to the Conference in his annual mission report. Whether Pastor Bergstrom's plans were too ambitious or whether he did not have the confidence of the convention we do not know, for the delegates made no reference to his recommendations but instead adopted the committee's report. And they went one step further. They recommended the organization of a Canada Conference and a meeting in July, 1912, to discuss matters pertaining to the Canadian field.

The meeting in Percival, July 23 to 26, 1912, at which preliminary plans for the organization of a Canada Conference were discussed, also had before it the important matter of the school question. There was little agreement on the subject. The best places, offering the most attractive subsidies, were far from the Swedish settlements. The committee felt it was unwise to take any permanent action until the most favorable location could be settled on. The committee further decided to encourage the work being done in Percival, because here the school could draw on students from several neighboring congregations as well as the large Swedish community there.

When the school committee met on August 26, 1912, two of the members, Pastor Bergstrom and a supporter, Mr. K. J. Lundgren, absented themselves in protest to the Conference's action. Pastor C. Thunberg and Mr. J. Wenman were added to replace them. The committee began to study the task set before it. Mr. P. J. Wickberg announced that two rooms in the parsonage suitable

for the school's use were being offered by the Immanuel congregation and a room in a nearby home was available for music instruction. The community further offered to make provision for board and lodging for up to forty students. The committee decided to establish the school under Minnesota Conference sponsorship, and to offer the following curriculum: Christianity, Swedish, English, Mathematics, History, Singing and Music. Pastor Claes Thunberg, newly ordained pastor of the Immanuel congregation, was called to be instructor in Christianity. Student E. Olmon was to handle the rest of the courses, with Miss Emma Wickberg in charge of music. It was hoped that the school could be made self-sustaining through gifts, offerings and tuition. Pastor P. A. Edquist of New Stockholm was elected chairman of the school's executive board.

It is interesting to note that a member of the provincial Legislature attended one of the meetings. Mr. George Watson, M.L.A. from Kerrobert, with a Mr. E. Schionneman were present to extend an invitation to the committee to consider their northern Saskatchewan town as site for the permanent school. The invitation was accepted.

The entire committee traveled to Regina where they were met by a committee from Kerrobert and escorted as guests to the town. The town council offered two large rooms in their new \$30,000 school building free of charge. If the committee decided to locate permanently twenty acres of land would be given for a campus. The council also made the rash promise of \$5,000 more than any other town might promise in the way of a cash subsidy. The committee regretfully indicated that they were not in any position to make a decision at that time.

Meanwhile, the little school at Percival opened its doors on November 11, 1912. Pastor Claes Thunberg recalls, "The Conference school in the parsonage was not conducive to a happy life for the occupants of the home. The parsonage in Percival was new and big, but it wasn't really finished. It had no adequate heating unit and it lacked other necessary facilities. The first year, as I remember it, was a rather good year. Olmon was popular with everybody. One of the students wrote recently . . . 'Do you remember the time we went for a moonlight sleighride; I had a team and Wenman had one. Did we have fun! Pastor Olman sure was full of the dickens!'"

Those were memorable years for the young people who attended the school and the pastors who taught there. Eight students enrolled the first day and this number grew to nineteen in the high school department and fifteen in the music school. There were twenty-five regular members in the Singing Society. Pastor Thunberg was put in charge of Swedish history and writing. Professor Olman was advised to establish a business course.

The first year was considered a test period to see if the people of the Canadian congregations were interested in supporting a Swedish Lutheran high school. Contemplating the future effect of the school, Student Olman mused, "We are trying our best to be of some benefit to the students and ultimately to the church. I feel sure that some of those in attendance this year will keep on in school if given a chance . . . Some of these will possibly give their lives to the work of the church . . . I have wondered if they shall be drawn away from our church because they have not been given a chance to prepare themselves in our school. Whatever happens . . . I pray, and I hope others do also, that something will be done to keep our young men that they may be of greatest good in their own church."

At the Canada Conference organization meeting in Stockholm, May 23-26, 1913, the subject of the school received attention. Pastor Dahlberg reported a gift of \$300 from the Minnesota Conference for the project. A sum of \$575.75 had been gathered in offerings, tuition and from other sources. Although no

special action was taken at the Stockholm meeting, the general concensus of opinion was that the school at Percival should continue.

The Conference school suffered a loss in the fall of 1913 when Student E. Olman left for the seminary in Rock Island. His replacement sent from the States had little interest in the school and as a result the work suffered.

Meetings were held in Winnipeg, August 12, 1913, and Marchwell, September 26 and February 17, 1914, in an attempt to deal with the problem of the school's permanent location. The offers of Yorkton and Kerrobert were reconsidered. A committee headed by Pastor Bergstrom was sent to Kerrobert, but in the end Yorkton was chosen as the more central location for the school. Pastor Bergstrom and Mr. J. Linner were commissioned to contact the authorities.

At the first annual convention of the Canada Conference an ambitious project was undertaken. Erection of a school at Yorkton was decided upon and a committee entrusted with the task of drawing up suitable plans and specifications. The Augustana Synod was to be contacted to see if an ingathering could be held for the project. Pastor Bergstrom was now president of the Canada Conference. This fact probably gave impetus to the Yorkton school proposal, and may explain the demise of the Percival school with which he had little sympathy. Pastor Thunberg had valiantly attempted in 1914 to recruit help from among the pastors and people in the United States but to no avail. The little school which had such a humble beginning, had a quiet and almost unnoticed end.

The great plans for a Conference institution in the city of Yorkton crumbled unexpectedly. The president of the Conference told the sad story to the Convention at Westaskiwin in March, 1915. Plans had been going forward quite well. Pastor Bergstrom and Mr. A. Walin, a building contractor, had visited Warren, Minnesota, to inspect a similar school project there. Letters had been written, a contract drawn up and submitted to the Conference lawyer. Contractors and architects were contacted. The Synod had granted an ingathering for the purpose. Things were looking up. But, the war in Europe and a crop failure in Saskatchewan disrupted the hopeful plans. It was impossible to make arrangements for a loan. It was unlikely that students or aid would be forthcoming from the congregations. There was one fortunate happening—the lawyer had been delayed in getting the documents signed!—so the Conference did not find itself bound to a contract. The authorities at Yorkton indicated that the matter would be reconsidered when circumstances had been altered.

Pastor Thunberg wrote recently, "As I think of the Canada Conference school matter now, forty-five years after it was decided, I feel that a better and wiser arrangement could have been made. There was only one man at the meetings in Stockholm and Percival qualified to be the head of a Conference school and that man was Pastor P. A. Edquist. He had a brilliant mind, a good and honest heart, and he could make use of both English and Swedish with ease. He was popular with everybody and well-known in Saskatchewan. He was a widower and had a daughter, Ruth, who was an accomplished musician . . . Edquist was probably up in years, but still there was at that time a lot of 'service' left in him. His fine daughter could have taken care of the music department.

"Edquist should have been chosen to take charge of the school. A different building than a home should have been found for the school . . . A suitable building could also be found, I am sure, in Stockholm or Yorkton . . . If Edquist had been chosen to take charge of the school matter in 1912, and if the school committee had made wiser decisions than it did, and if Dahlberg had been re-elected president at the Winnipeg meeting in 1914, it is very possible that

the school would never have been discontinued. How wonderful it would have been for the Canada Conference and our Augustana church if our little school could have continued in Yorkton in the fall of 1914, and definite steps taken for a permanent school building there. It would have united and been a blessing for our good people in Canada."

The school matter was revived briefly in 1916 when it was announced that Swift Current had invited the Conference to open a school there. It was recommended that no action be taken. Each year, the Conference president mentioned the school matter in passing, but no further serious steps were taken until 1920. The school proposal went out after a brilliant flame of hope, never to revive again. At that meeting the Conference resolved to locate a school in Winnipeg after soliciting funds to finance it. One word of warning was offered . . . the Conference must not be put in debt over the matter. Nothing came of the plan and the school question expired.

#### B. THE PUBLICATION QUESTION

Like the matter of the school, the question of an Augustana publication for Canada was introduced in the early years of mission work. The idea did not originate as a promotional measure so much as a defensive effort against 'outside attacks. It was Pastor Udden whose insight led the way.

In the year 1887, a monthly Swedish newspaper named the "Scandinavian Canadian" began publication in Winnipeg. In 1892, the increasing circulation encouraged the publishers to make it a weekly. The Immigration Department of the Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway both subsidized the paper. It was sent to Immigration Department agents in Sweden, Norway and Denmark to be distributed free-of-charge. It was also sent free-of-charge to settlers. The publisher was Mr. Emanuel Ohlen, who was instrumental in settling the New Stockholm area. Unfortunately, Mr. Ohlen was not kindly disposed to the Lutheran Church and this was reflected in the pages of this newspaper. Pastor Udden recognized the need for a newspaper which would speak for the Lutheran Church and at the same time help to unite the scattered Swedish peoples in Canada.

In 1894, Pastor Udden went into partnership with a Mr. K. Fleming who had arrived a year and half before from Norrtelje. Fleming was a typesetter and lent his technical assistance to the scheme. The paper began as a monthly of four pages bearing the name "Sions Vaktaren". Eventually, the name became simply "Vaktaren" and the paper was published weekly. In August, 1895, Fleming purchased the publication, continuing on his own until the winter of 1896 when he sold out to a Mr. J. E. Forslund. The name, "Canada Vaktaren" adopted by Fleming when he took over the paper, was changed again, this time to the simple title "Canada". In 1905 Mr. Fleming bought back into the paper, becoming editor and partner. He sold out finally in 1906 at which time the new owners changed the name to the "Swedish Canadian News" (Svenska Canada Tidningen).

When Udden was editing the paper it was a typical church paper offering news of the congregations, but also featuring secular news from Sweden and Canada. Inspirational articles were mingled with government land advertisements, news of the Swedish royal family and Canadian Prime Minister Laurier and birth and death notices. It filled a definite need. As the paper changed hands it became progressively more secular, until in 1906 it actually had become antagonistic to the Church. The Mission Covenant Church had meanwhile been publishing a Swedish paper of its own under the name "Canada Posten".

When L. P. Bergstrom reported to the 1910 Minnesota Conference Convention, he said, "What would help us . . . would be a church publication. We have nothing, but the sects have their Scandinavian organs." Of the successor

to Pastor Udden's "Vaktaren" Pastor Bergstrom declared, "The periodical . . . has become entirely political and does not serve the churches."

Each year, Pastor Bergstrom reiterated his plea for a Conference publication. In 1913, he reported that he had contracted for a page of church news in the Swedish Canadian News. A committee of pastors had offered to buy the paper, but the publisher was unwilling to sell. In 1914, Pastor Tengwald of Calgary was named head of a publication committee of the newly organized Canada Conference. Tengwald's committee went right to work, planning a magazine in the style of the old magazine "Augustana" to be named "Canada Harold". Mr. P. Nelson of Winnipeg was chosen manager. Bids were called for, and a printer at Wetaskiwin, Alberta, received the contract. Advertising space was sold. The first issue was published on April 1, 1914, and met with general approval. Two developments led to the transfer of the magazine to a Winnipeg publisher. Tengwald had accepted a call to serve Zion Church in Winnipeg, isolating him from the Alberta printer, and the publisher in Wetaskiwin had become involved in technical problems which made it impossible for him to guarantee issuing the magazine on time.

The newspaper, a handsome tabloid size publication, made very interesting reading. It grew to 16 pages.

Here, too, the Great War played havoc with the Conference's plans. Just as the newspaper was gaining in circulation, advertising took a decline leaving the "Canada Harold" with a deficit to report in 1915. Pastor Tengwald fought for the paper in the face of the recession, censorship and the rising cost of production. "He was a prolific writer," said Claes Thunberg. "He and his family did a lot of work without getting either praise or pay for it."

In an attempt to revive the flagging interest in the newspaper, the format was enlarged to full newspaper size and the number of pages increased from six to eight. Secular news was added and the paper issued twice monthly in an effort to keep the news fresh. The efforts were rewarded with 500 new subscribers in 1915-1916. In 1916, the Conference set up a list of 30 solicitors among the congregations and named a publishing board of four laymen and three pastors, the latter being J. O. Lindquist, V. J. Tengwald and C. Thunberg. It was a vain effort, for in 1917 it was announced that due to lack of means the "Canada Harold" had ceased publication. Desperate measures were taken by the Conference to revive the newspaper. A joint-stock company was established with capital set at \$50,000. Shares were offered at \$10.00 each. The plan was that as soon as \$5,000 was realized from the sale of stock, publication would resume. Congregations which had contributed to keep the former "Canada Harold" alive would be given stock for their investment. Men were appointed in each congregation to sell shares. The executive committee of the Conference was entrusted with the responsibility for the publication until the business was organized. These great plans were to prove costly both financially and spiritually. Care was taken to stress financial non-involvement on the part of the Conference, but this advice went unheeded. The Committee again tried to buy the "Swedish Canadian News" but failed in its attempt.

The executive committee recognized the need for some interested person to champion the newspaper cause. Pastor Johannes E. Lindberg of Kenora was chosen as being well-experienced in the field of publication. He was called for three months at a salary of \$125 plus traveling expenses. The Kenora church board disputed the call, saying that ministers were needed before a newspaper. Nevertheless, Lindberg accepted the call and began his career. The result of his visitation and work was the publication on December 18, 1919, of the first number of "Canada News". Pastor Lindberg was named editor-in-chief. All looked very rosy in 1919, but a year later, the Conference's executive committee was busy hiring a lawyer to bring order out of chaos. Built more on high hopes

than on sound business principles the company folded up. On September 29, 1920, not a year after the first issue of the paper had reached the subscribers, an emergency meeting was held. "Pastor Melander was asked to secure Lawyer Morrisey—who served as the Conference's advocate at the meeting of the publishing company. It was decided that the treasurer should be commissioned to take notes for the amount which the Canada News Company owes the Home Mission Treasury with six percent interest after the 15th of September." The Conference claimed \$1,085.76 against the publication firm it had fostered. Pastors and people who had invested money in the venture were bitterly disappointed and disillusioned. Undoubtedly this financial set-back contributed to the mission reversal experienced in the early twenties. The "Canada Times" was the last venture into publication for the Conference for more than three decades. The publication's "funeral" was costly and the memory of the event burned deeply into the minds of pastors and people alike. Pastor Lindberg, no doubt broken by the turn of events, left Canada for Sweden.

The "Lutheran Messenger", published in Calgary in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties, was recommended to the churches of the Canada Conference as its "official paper", but in no way did they support it financially. The "Lutheran Voice", a publication of the Canada Committee of the American Lutheran Conference and edited for many years by Professor H. Schmidt of Luther College, Regina, was born out of a recommendation from the Canada Conference in 1933. The "Voice" replaced the "Messenger". Canada Conference news was disseminated, then, through the medium of the American Lutheran Conference organ.

It was not until 1954 that the Conference renewed its interest in a publication for the Augustana churches in Canada. Action taken at the 1954 convention resulted in the birth of "Views" in 1955 under the editorship of the Rev. Ralph Wallin. "Views", which began as a quarterly magazine, continues now as a monthly periodical distributed entirely at Conference expense for all members of Conference congregations, edited by Pastor Duane Emberg.

In connection with the church papers it should be mentioned that the Conference, shortly after its organization, established a branch of the Augustana Book Concern in Winnipeg. This book store was installed in the office of the "Canada Harold". The store, under the expert management of Mrs. V. J. Tengwald, enjoyed a short but fruitful history. It was recognized that the Canadian churches needed a supply house for inspirational literature to help combat the influx of traveling "Gospel salesmen". Lutheran books, periodicals and pamphlets were made available in Canada. However, the book store was dependent upon the promotion available in the pages of the "Canada Harold" and when this newspaper ceased publication, the book store experienced a decline in sales. When the "Canada Times" expired in 1920, the book store was laid to rest beside it.

## *Chapter VI*

### ADOLESCENCE AND MATURITY

The two periods, 1913-1920 and 1921-1929 offer startling contrasts in the character and activity of the Conference. The Canada Conference in its early years, like an adolescent child, can be characterized as being both vigorous and impetuous. In the later period, there was prudence and a maturity of judgment directly traceable to the painful experiences of the previous decade. Two of the most serious matters to confront the young Conference have been dealt with at length in the last chapter. The following pages are limited to a general view of the Conference's activity.

#### *1913-1920*

The important formative years from organization to the dawn of the 'twenties were marked by some of the most remarkable achievements and disastrous failures in the Conference's history. These were exciting years that held great promise for the future of Augustana work in Canada. The relatively youthful ministerium held high hopes and dreamed extravagant dreams.

"The organization of the Conference was," said Claes Thunberg, first Conference secretary, "like a shot in the arm, especially in regard to the work in Saskatchewan. I know that when I served as district missionary in Saskatchewan in 1917, the people everywhere showed a great interest in the church's work. Everywhere people received me gladly. Many new members were gained."

The Conference fortuitously established area missionaries in each of the three districts. From the autobiography of the elderly missionary, E. M. Eriksson, we gain an insight into the life and responsibility of a pastor in this position. He was appointed to serve in Alberta.

"In Edmonton we succeeded to rent a suitable house and I began traveling around in the large mission field to visit the various places where Swedes were living and to preach the Word of God to them. Rev. Tengwald had succeeded to get a free pass for me on three different railroads. I therefore made both many and long trips. The greatest difficulty is that the Swedes are very scattered and one finds only a few in each place. The only places where there were churches (buildings) were Calgary and Calmar. In all the other places I preached in schoolhouses or homes.

"It was not possible to gather the people on a weekday. I therefore had to stay over several days when a train went only twice a week. I, therefore, was seldom home and my wife had to be by herself most of the time." The work proved too strenuous for the elderly pastor so he appealed to the Executive Committee for a younger man to replace him. None was available, so he stayed on the field until February, 1919. During this time he traveled as far as Chauvin, 160 miles east of Edmonton and Junkins, 80 miles west of Edmonton; also traveling to Sangada and Richdale.

The people among whom these missionaries ministered were still pioneering in many respects. Claes Thunberg recalls, "the people direct from Sweden were poor immigrants, starting 'from scratch'. Often, things were more primitive with them. When they organized a congregation it took time before things ran smoothly. The pastor had to use patience, tact and Christian love. Often, they had very little money so they couldn't give much, but they were always kind

and hospitable. A farmer in Percival told me that every time his dog barked he was wondering if a (bill) collector was coming. The wheat that the farmer raised was often frost-bitten and had to be sold at a low grade. I believe it was in 1914 that a bushel of oats sold for 25 cents. The Swedes from the States, in most cases, brought with them farm implements and money and most of them were trained in the church work. Often they were inter-married to other nationalities, Norwegians, Germans, etc. . . . there were some immigrants from Sweden antagonistic toward the Church. I blame the condition in Sweden for that. One of those immigrants attended our Canada Conference in Winnipeg, 1914. At one of the sessions he stood up and gave the following testimony: 'I swore death to the church in Sweden. (He came from Stockholm.) And when I arrived in Canada I joined the church. That proves that we must have the church and that it has something good for us'."

The new Conference had many difficulties to overcome. One of them was the frequent inability of members to sense their evangelistic responsibility to unchurched neighbours.

"In 1918 or 1919 the treasurer in Emanuel, Assiniboia, went with me in my model T to solicit for money for the Church being built on the hill," recalls Pastor Thunberg. "We were about one-third of a mile from a farm home when I asked him, 'who lives over there?' He said, 'No use going there, he is an infidel.' I said, 'We are so close, let's go.' As we came to the man who was working outside he greeted us as follows: 'I am so glad to see a minister coming. I want to give 25 dollars to the church building and I want you to baptize our eight children. My wife hasn't been baptized either. Very likely she would be baptized too.' All that before we had told why we had come. Twenty-five dollars was the largest amount anyone gave, I believe. He wanted me to come soon and baptize the children, I told him that since he was building a new home I thought it would be better to wait until it was finished and then have the service in the new home. They were willing to have it that way. The service was held, I baptized the eight children, his wife and a sister and brother of hers. The family joined Emanuel. The husband and father became among the most active members in the Church."

Until the organization of the Conference, Swedish had been used almost exclusively in the Canadian churches. A transition began to take place which extended over two decades. In Percival, for example, Sunday evening services were in English and at young people's meetings both languages were used. Two languages were used in confirmation classes. An English language ladies' aid was formed in Percival and in Fleming.

Through the efforts of the district missionaries during the 'teens, sixteen congregations were organized of which only three remain today: Emanuel, Assiniboia; Ebenezer, Lac du Bonnet, and Salem, Scandia. Those congregations which have since been dissolved or merged with others are as follows: in Alberta: Kingman 1913-1953, Edmonton 1914-1923, and Donald 1919-1923; in Manitoba: Ericksdale 1912-1953, Lillesve 1914-1957, Fisherton 1917-1923, and Teulon 1918-1923; in Saskatchewan: Shaunavon (Zion) 1914-1933, Shaunavon (Libanon) 1914-1924, Scotsguard 1914-1926, Goodwater 1914-1939, Abbey 1916-1924, Churchbridge 1919-1958, and Kamsack 1919-1942. Many of these congregations, as can be noted, had very short lives, victims of premature birth, vacancy and the population mobility.

It is interesting to note that this was the period of great missionary activity in Saskatchewan. Nineteen of the thirty-one congregations organized from 1910-1920 were in this central prairie province. With the remarkable growth in number of congregations and lesser growth in membership the demand for pastoral care was great. The Conference ministerium increased until in 1918 the Canada Conference counted eighteen pastors, the largest number to serve in

the area to that time and for many years after. It was not until 1955 that the number of parish pastors in Canada increased beyond that figure. With more pastors to lead the churches and a bustling interest in the affairs of the Conference, stewardship increased. Canada was still dependent upon the Minnesota Conference for financial support. The generous subsidy provided by the mother conference was greatly needed during the early years of the Canada Conference history. In 1915, \$3,500 was received to help in the Canadian work; in 1916 and 1920, \$2,500 and every other year until 1921 the sum of \$2,000 was received.

A major factor having an adverse effect upon mission endeavour in Canada was the first Great War. The Augustana Synod heard in 1917, "During the four years since the Conference was organized, three have been war years involving a declining population, hard times and industrial deterioration in the big cities." Young men were taken away from home and church. There was a general spirit of antagonism toward the church and its work. The city missions for which the Conference had high hopes were struggling for existence. A large number of Augustana Lutheran men were at the front in Europe and many perished on the battlefield. These were difficult times. Twelve vacant parishes extended calls in 1917 and all were declined. Not the war but salaries proved to be the problem here. "The Conference could not offer attractive wages," the Conference was told. "For example, we note that of the candidates for the ministry who will be ordained at our forthcoming Synodical meeting, five were called to the very best parishes in Canada, nevertheless, all of them declined." Congregations in Canada could not hope to match salaries with congregations in the more prosperous American communities.

There was great joy, then, in 1918 when seven pastors responded to the appeal for men to enter the Canadian field.

A new approach to mission work in Canada was made in southern Alberta as the Conference joined with the Augustana Colonization Association in arranging for the settlement of Swedes in that area. Interest in the work of the Colonization Association had been shown since 1915 when a "bureau" for settlement of newcomers was set up in Winnipeg. In March, 1917, the Rev. V. J. Tengwald received a letter from E. C. Elving of the Association. He told of a survey trip taken in August, 1915, to investigate the possibilities of establishing a settlement near Brooks, Alberta. "The president of the Canada Conference, and vice-president L. P. Bergstrom and O. Lindgren, together with Mr. Olaf Wallin represented the Canada Conference, and (C. E. Elving) president of the Augustana Colonization (Society) constituted the committee. Mr. Allan Cameron had sent his assistant, Mr. O. Kirkwold, to show us the land in question which the Canadian Pacific Railway had promised to set aside as an exclusively Swedish Lutheran colony. The lay of the land and the nature of the soil and the splendid irrigation system greatly impressed the committee." The area is now known as the Scandia and Ranier District. Everything seemed promising, so at Calgary a specific agreement was drawn up by the committee. There was a year's delay during which Pastor J. Torell (presumably of the Society) visited the area, finding everything satisfactory. "Since he had forty years of experience in judging settlements without a mistake, his words carried great weight." The war again intervened, hindering further plans, but L. P. Bergstrom kept the project alive by publicizing it throughout the Augustana Church. One hundred thousand acres of good irrigated land were set aside for the settlement which was tentatively called "Uppland". Prospects looked good. "More than twice the number of our Conference's present membership could well find a prosperous livelihood there . . ." stated Conference president, V. J. Tengwald, to the Canada Conference convention in 1917.

There were members of the ministerium and laity in the Conference who did not share the Colonization Society's enthusiasm. Their point of view was

expressed as follows: "For the present we have enough small Swedish settlements and congregations. What is now needed is that those which are small may grow. Much equally good and cheaper land is to be found in nearly all our Swedish communities." The suggestion was made to publicize present settlements to encourage immigration. "Unless more people are added to the present congregations they will perish one by one." These words proved prophetic in many instances.

The colonization scheme lay dormant until 1919 when twenty families bought land in "Uppland". Pastor Elving reported to the Conference convention, "We have about 200 persons, nearly all family heads, who have registered as permanent settlers in Uppland. Several of these plan to move there this spring and others a little later on." He later wrote, "I entertain the hope that by the Grace of God we shall be able to establish a Swedish Lutheran community at Bow Slope, about 30 or 40 miles south of Brooks, Alberta, which shall be a blessing for the whole Canada Conference not only in our time but for time to come." And the Conference president commented, "They who moved to this community are all churchmen who take a deep interest in church activities. It has also been requested that congregations be organized in Uppland this year and that they be received at our Conference meeting."

Pioneer of Uppland, John Bengtson, reminiscing in the *Lutheran Companion* of October 25, 1944, wrote: "Our finances have improved and our farms and homes are better equipped. It now requires about \$20,000 worth of motor cars to carry us here for worship. How different from pioneer days! Our pioneers often came to worship in weather twenty to thirty degrees below zero, with the family wrapped in blankets. They came in lumber wagons, in grain tanks, on bob-sleds, and even on "drags" with runners made from fence posts. To church they would go, and to church they got! And today, through the avenue of these last years, the old pioneer can not help but again see that meandering column of church-goers coming across the prairies to worship in some lowly pioneer cabin or shack or granary, or later in the school district's horse barn."

On May 19, 1919, after months of conducting informal worship services the farmers organized Salem Lutheran Church of Uppland, later to be known as Scandia, Alberta. Dr. L. G. Abrahamson served as chairman for the meeting.

The colonization plan did not accomplish its ambitious plans in toto, but it did establish a thriving community which is still a strong centre of Augustana Lutheran activity in Alberta. Unfortunately, the Ranier area had to be withdrawn from the original contract so only Scandia remained to be colonized by Swedish people.

Meanwhile, the mission activity across the prairies was increasing. The Conference Women's Missionary Society was organized at Czar, Alberta, in 1917. The contribution of money and workers made by the Conference W.M.S. and the Synod organization in particular, was an important factor in mission advance during the early years.

The leadership of the Conference changed three times during the period 1913-1920. Pastor J. G. Dahlberg, whose sterling efforts led the new conference to be organized on firm constitutional ground, served as president for only one year. He was defeated at the first annual convention by Pastor L. P. Bergstrom. Pastor Dahlberg had been critical of Pastor Bergstrom's activities during the first year of the Conference when the latter was without real authority in the Canada area. He did not hide his criticism. This fact, plus Pastor Bergstrom's popularity among the people in Canada brought about the resultant abrupt change in Conference leadership. It was unfortunate that the pastors and people were faced with the choice of two men of such high calibre. Had there been a more settled leadership during the formative years of the Con-

ference its history might have been different. Pastor Bergstrom was succeeded in 1916 by the Rev. V. J. Tengwald who served out the remainder of the decade. The conflict of opinions held among the pastors and leaders of the Conference led to intervention by the Synod and an appeal to "its latest addition to the family circle that such divisions never brought about any blessing and that the effect was especially detrimental on a new field where the people were not so well established." It is only the grace of God that kept the "divisions" from undermining and totally destroying an effective witness for Christ in Canada.

The war was not the only tragedy to afflict the Conference during those first years. In the winter of 1918-1919 the influenza epidemic struck Canada and Augustana work in the Dominion. Scores of laymen and several pastors were disabled and some died. "In Edmonton alone about 555 people died in two months," Rev. E. M. Eriksson recalls in his autobiography. Church services were suspended; people were forbidden to gather together for any occasion. The church at Kingman was taken over by the Provincial Government and used as an emergency hospital.

On November 9, Pastor Leonard Heiner, serving the Kingman-Wilhelmina-Camrose parish took ill. He had just written to the Conference president, V. J. Tengwald, "The epidemic is raging in these parts. At the present time, however, I visit no sick persons except when called on, but then I consider it my duty to go, however dangerous it might be. I have visited several homes where all the members of the family have been sick. I am yet well, thanks be to God." He told Pastor Tengwald that he had had a difficult time to get together enough people to carry a coffin (that of a Mr. Hanson of Wilhelmina) to the cemetery. Nine days after he took ill, Pastor Heiner died. His wife wrote to Pastor Tengwald telling him that he had sung his favorite hymn, "Take the name of Jesus with you," as he died. When he was buried none of the district pastors were allowed to be present. Three months later, February 9, 1919, when the emergency period was over, the Alberta district held a memorial service at Fridhem Church near Camrose. Though the pastors were now able to gather together, the threat of the influenza germ was still prevalent.

On March 10, only a month after the above-mentioned service, another pastor was afflicted. Traveling to Kenora for the Conference Convention of 1919, Pastor Abr. Wattman of Shaunavon took ill while stopping over at the home of Rev. Thunberg in Moose Jaw. He was taken to the hospital where he died on March 20, 1919. A telegram was sent to notify the convention of his illness, but the delegates were already homeward bound at the time of his death. Pastor Wattman's visit to the Thunberg parsonage resulted in the entire family coming down with the disease. Pastor Thunberg, being present at the Convention, escaped the siege. Reverend K. J. Bring conducted the funeral service for Pastor Wattman at Shaunavon on March 23. Thus, two able Augustana pastors were among the many victims of the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919.

The Children's Home Fund was begun in 1915; the women of Fridhem church, Camrose, initiated interest in the establishment of a Conference Children's Home. The following year, a fund was set up for the purpose of setting up an old people's home. Both these funds were eventually merged and became the financial basis for the Canada Conference Home for the Aged at Wetaskiwin.

#### THE TWENTIES

The turbulent 'teens were over. The Canada Conference now faced what may be called the "tragic twenties", ten years of serious setback and slow recovery. The hard school of experience had brought the Conference to maturity, a bit sickly perhaps, and undernourished, but willing to submit itself to serious self-examination. "Proceed with caution" was the watchword. There were some historic milestones ahead, but none so spectacular as in the previous decade.

The advances made in the 'twenties were of sound and lasting benefit to the Conference.

The Conference president in his message to the delegates in convention in 1921 set forth a program of "consolidation and concentration" due to the hard times. A drastic cut-back in the number of congregations, membership and pastors in the field took place during the years 1920 to 1926. The loss of pastors and the failure to interest new men in the field brought the Conference ministerium to a dangerously low level numerically. The efforts of the Conference to bring its statistics into line with the facts resulted in the "pruning" from the Conference roster of a number of congregations. Many churches had not reported to the Conference for some years and it was doubtful that any congregational life existed in these places. In 1920, the Conference counted 54 congregations, 2,157 communicants and 12 pastors; in 1926, there were only 43 congregations, 1,478 communicants and nine pastors. The Synod president, Dr. Brandelle commented on the situation in Canada at the 1925 Synod meeting: "All our conferences are more or less woefully undermanned with the exception of one. And in Canada the situation is nothing short of catastrophic in view of the greatness of the field and of our inability to care for it in a proper manner." It was at this time that the Canada Conference Student Scholarship Fund was established to encourage Canadians to study for the ministry.

The lack of pastoral care during these early years of the 1920's no doubt accelerated the shrinkage experienced by the Conference. There was another factor involved, too. Dr. Anton Nelson recollects, "One of the weaknesses of our Church when I began my ministry in Canada in 1924 was that only one other pastor was able to conduct a service in the English language in somewhat of an adequate manner. This meant that our Church failed to minister to the young people and we had difficulty in convincing the older generation that that had any merits. The transition from the Swedish to the English language was accepted in good grace in every community, to my knowledge, with the exception of Winnipeg." In Manitoba's capital, the Swedish stalwarts in the congregation resisted the change for some years.

It was in 1924 that the Conference turned to the Board of Missions of the Augustana Synod for assistance in meeting the needs of its sizeable field. Attempts had been made for two years to secure a Superintendent of Missions but to no avail. Then in 1926, Pastor Anton A. Nelson serving First Lutheran Church in Calgary received and accepted a call from the Board to fill the position. The system of district missionaries was dropped. Pastor Nelson's first concern was to make spot surveys in various cities including Edmonton, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Regina and others. It was his conviction that the Conference had a ministry for city folk as well as country people. "Had our work been begun at these points and others at least a decade sooner, our Church would be much stronger in Canada today."

Manpower, the lack of it, was still a problem. The Board of Missions found it no easier to get men to come to Canada than had the Conference Executive. Home Mission secretary J. Ekholm reported to the 1926 Synod: "My humble opinion is that the day has now come for the Synod to take hold of the Home Mission problem in Canada in real earnest. And the only way to solve this problem is to gather young men on the field and give them the necessary preparatory training there, before they go to our Seminary at Rock Island to complete their studies and equip themselves to be ordained as pastors for our Canadian fields. The Home Mission Board has experienced again and again how difficult it is to persuade young men, born and raised in the United States to accept a permanent call to Canada, especially now when the dearth of ministers in our Synod is so dangerously great."

Two decades would pass before any serious steps would be taken by Synod in the direction suggested by this report. But, it was not only the lack of pastors that troubled the Canada Conference. "Canada was plagued with several unfortunate lay-preachers or so-called students," writes Dr. Nelson, "The main reason for such a situation was that we were in desperate need for men to proclaim the Gospel. Thus, when we were unable to secure ordained pastors, we received these men on trial with open arms."

Two lay preachers who made a great contribution in bringing the Gospel to the many vacant parishes of Canada were Richard Odelberg and Andrew Lindquist. Laymen of note who demonstrated their love of the Lord and concern for His work are remembered by Dr. Anton Nelson as follows: Mr. J. R. Bergren, Anton Persson, Ole Olson of Calgary; Mr. John Bengtson and C. J. Anderson of Scandia; Mr. John Long and Victor Lindgren of Czar; Mr. J. Johanson and Per Selin of Stockholm; Mr. Vickberg of Percival; Mr. J. A. Linner of Manson, Manitoba; Mr. Carl J. Johnson of Erickson; Mr. K. J. Lundgren of Marchwell; Mr. F. W. Pohlmann of Shaunavon; Mr. Pete Nelson and Nels Pearson of Winnipeg; Mr. John Kron and Oscar Cronlund of Kenora. As Dr. Nelson says, "There are no doubt others that should be added." These are representative, at least, of the many others who gave of their time and talents to the work of the Conference down through the years. Dr. Nelson makes the following tribute: "I would speak a bold word in favor of our Canadian laymen or lay leadership. They helped to save our Lutheran Church in those trying days when we suffered from extreme shortage of pastors. Their indoctrination, sound faith and their ability to conduct organization meetings, Bible classes and even the preaching services, protected many of our churches against sects that tried desperately to make their inroads in several communities."

The work of the Russelites or International Bible Students disrupted the work on a number of fields. They were largely responsible for the dissolution of the congregations at Falun and Calmar in Alberta, and Wadena and Fleming in Saskatchewan.

The Conference lost two vital congregations when Zion, Fort William and Immanuel, Port Arthur decided to join the Minnesota Conference. The lack of a decent highway through the rocks and woods east of Winnipeg cut the congregations off from association with the rest of the Canada Conference. This and the fact that the Canada Conference was experiencing financial difficulty brought forth the action in 1926.

Yet, it was in 1926 that the Conference began to experience a turning in the tide. The decade concluded with 14 pastors at work in the field. There were 47 congregations with 1,768 confirmed members in 1930. Only four new missions were begun during the decade. Two of these were organized at the beginning of the period, 1920: St. Peter's in Meacham and Berea in Punnichy, both in Saskatchewan. Two others were organized at the end of the decade, in 1929: Augustana, Edmonton and Augustana, Saskatoon. Three of the four congregations are still on the Conference rolls, a high percentage when compared with former decades. Punnichy succumbed in 1942 after a fitful history marked with dissension among its membership. The two city congregations at Edmonton and Saskatoon were destined to become major outposts of Augustana in Canada. The congregation at Edmonton was the second, and this time successful, attempt at establishing a church in the Alberta capital.

The Conference began to flourish spiritually as a result of strengthened Sunday School programs and emphasis on Bible study among the Luther Leagues.

During the decade, the Canada Conference was led by three presidents: O. P. Johnson served from 1920 to 1924; he was followed by Olaf Lindgren, 1924 to 1927. In 1927, upon the death of Pastor Lindgren, the Rev. Anton

Nelson, then serving as vice-president, assumed the presidency and served a record twelve years in that office. Dr. Nelson served a quarter of a century in Canada, his entire ministry until 1957, and the history of missions in Canada from the beginning of his term of office until his leave-taking was influenced by this dedicated man. Certainly, of all the men who served the Canadian field for Augustana, his is a unique and important contribution.

Many and varied were the experiences Dr. Nelson had during his years in Canada. He recalls, "When Mrs. Nelson and I motored to the Peace River country before there was an Alcan Highway, we were forced to detour via railroad track at Slave Lake because the so-called highway was hip-deep in muskeg. As we had traveled for some distance on the track we were forced into the ditch by a roadmaster who apprised us that a train was coming. As we relaxed in the long weeds in the ditch awaiting the arrival of that train, Mrs. Nelson felt that we gained a good deal of comfort through a man who came walking on the track, who paused to tell us, 'Well, there will be a good highway through here next year.' At that point we had visions of setting up camp for a year in the ditch along the railroad track. On that trip, as we dealt with the pioneers and homesteaders over hundreds of miles in the area, we slept in our faithful Ford for seventeen nights in succession. We realized that if we had accepted some of the hospitality in the area, many more besides my wife and myself would have been bed partners, since we saw some of these little sociable friends crawling around on the walls even in broad daylight. We did much of our cooking in the open, even sampling some of the Indian's delicious smoked white fish."

On another occasion Dr. Nelson remembers, "On my first visit to Marchwell to confirm a class instructed by one of our students, I was asked to baptize a young girl about two and a half years of age. As I proceeded with the baptism the sponsors left it to my responsibility to hold the girl during the act of baptism. The girl became a bit impatient as I tried to arrange to hold her on my one arm, and therefore proceeded to give me some advice. As she saw the table with the bowl of water on it, she said very distinctly, 'Oh, stick my head right in there. That's what they do at home.' Needless to say, the crowded church was not too reverent for a matter of minutes following that."

Dr. Nelson also tells a story about the grand old man of the Conference, Pastor Otto Eklund. He was "a man who always insisted on things being done right and became impatient one day with his organist and congregation at Wilhelmina for the manner in which they played and sang the Swedish Psalms. Therefore, he arose to give them some good advice. He stated, 'I know you folks here at Wilhelmina like your long milk (a long and stringy Swedish milk), but I didn't think you had to play and sing "long milk".' Pastor Eklund, incidentally, served the same congregation, Emmanuel of Meeting Creek, Alberta, from his ordination in 1916 until his retirement in 1951, with the exception of but one short period of time, when he served in Vancouver and New Westminster, B.C.

It has been mentioned that Pastor O. Lindgren died in 1927. He was one of the three Augustana pastors who laid down their lives in Canada during this decade. Pastor Lindgren was buried at Czar, Alberta. The same year, the Rev. Klas Bring received his heavenly reward after a long and faithful ministry in southern Saskatchewan, centering around Waldeck and later Swift Current. He was buried in the latter community. Pastor Bring was typical of the many men who quietly and unobtrusively served the Gospel cause in Canada. Daniel Friberg wrote of this pioneer pastor in the "Lutheran Companion" in 1945. "From his homestead some miles northeast of Swift Current he served the entire southwestern portion of the province. With his horse and buggy, suitcase full of hymn books, and a storm-proof lantern, he traversed distances as great as sixty

miles to minister to pioneer Augustana families on the prairies . . . He always kept his appointments with his scattered handfuls of parishioners, even when blizzards forced him to walk the last half dozen miles—and he always arrived with his bagful of hymnals." Of Pastor Bring Mrs. Sedley Person of Shaunavon recollects, "He linked all the scattered communities, acting as a bearer of news and messages. Pioneers welcomed the pastor's visits. He was in his sixties, grey-bearded, dignified, kindly. He led the family devotions, shared the meals and spent the night with them. Sometimes, the children slept on the floor while he enjoyed their bed, or if there was no extra bed he slept on the floor. In winter he wore a fur coat, the back of which had all the fur rubbed off from long hours in the buggy. He was known to help with the harvest if a man was needed, shovelling grain or hauling sheaves." Mrs. Person remembers his fondness of loaf sugar with bread and butter.

A tragic death took place at Dubuc in 1921 where the Rev. Axel Sjoding died after only three short, but for the congregation, happy months in the parish. He was buried at Dubuc and mourned by family and parishioners alike. His wife continued to live and work in the congregation and community for some years and was an example of dedication and determination.

It was in 1921 that the foundations for a Canada Conference Luther League were laid at the organization of two district Luther Leagues in Alberta and Saskatchewan, respectively. In 1928, the Conference petitioned the Synod to open a home for immigrants in Winnipeg. The Board of Home Missions, believing that the Conference was already over-institutionalized, turned down the proposal.

The Canada Conference was showing every sign of a developing maturity and strength. Stewardship was still weak and pastoral care was not yet what it should have been, but all in all the Conference found itself on a firmer footing than during all the previous years of its existence. This was a good thing, for the great depression lay ahead.

## *Chapter VII*

### THE DIRTY THIRTIES

The three "d's" of drought, duststorms and depression made the "dirty thirties", as they became known, ugly years for everyone everywhere, but most particularly on the Canadian field. Here most of the Augustana congregations were located in the country, and the plight of the farmer had an adverse effect on the church's work. Pastors and people suffered alike. The Synod president reported that the 1932 national income in the U.S. was fifty percent below normal, expenditures on luxuries and recreation also fifty percent below normal, and contributions to church work just forty percent of normal. These figures were more drastic in respect to Canada. It is obvious that congregational budgets were cut to the bone. In the early 'thirties the Conference Executive Board regretfully announced salary cuts each year. One pastor with a five-point parish was receiving \$1,350; a single layman with two congregations some miles apart got \$600. The mission treasury aided particularly needy pastors with the few dollars at its disposal. Dr. Anton Nelson recalls that pastors' families "fared like the average family at that time, and truly better than many of our parishioners. However, some pastors, because they failed to receive a considerable portion of their salary for several years, with much difficulty supplied their families with food and clothing. They were even forced to resort to borrowing a few dollars from friends to purchase their railroad ticket to visit scattered congregations which they served or to buy gasoline to operate their car in conducting Sunday worship services. Those were indeed faith-testing days for many of the brethren. It made it difficult for us to encourage men to join our ranks under such circumstances."

It was expensive to operate a car and yet the pastor had to, not only for his transportation, but many times to assist those who had no means of travel when necessity demanded it. The people were so financially embarrassed that some asked for baptisms in the home rather than the church because they could not even afford proper clothes for the infants. The financial distress of most of our Augustana people in Canada during those dreary years, and the ingenious ways they succeeded in carrying on despite their difficulty would make a story by itself.

Surprisingly enough, though the Conference was in constant economic distress during these years, it only failed two years (1933 and 1934) to meet its Synodical apportionment. More surprising is the fact that during these difficult times, while the other conferences of the Church, and the Synod itself, were experiencing loss in membership, the Canada Conference consistently reported gains. In fact, for a number of years it stood at the head of the list of Conferences in the percentage of growth.

Be this as it may, the history of missions during this period is a sorry one. Out of six congregations organized and one re-organized, only one remains today. Messiah Lutheran Church of Moose Jaw, organized in 1931 by Pastor A. E. Eriksson with twenty-one adult members, lasted only five fitful years until 1935 when the field was turned over to the Evangelical Lutheran Church (now The A.L.C.). The congregation at Brightview, Alberta, was re-organized in vain in 1930, for it was finally dissolved in 1933. Pastor O. H. Miller

organized a congregation at Valley View, Alberta, in 1931. Pastor C. Robert Pearson, while a student serving in Edmonton, uncovered the sad history of this latter congregation.

"The people of Valley View at one time some years ago felt a crying need for a church in the community, organized a congregation and Sunday school, and collected lumber in preparation for their building. The Church would be Lutheran. In the meantime, a Bolshevik spoke in the Town Hall at a public meeting. His speech became the death knell for that church building and congregation. Today, lumber intended for the church building lies rotting outside the town hall. Services and Ladies' Aids have been held since then, but the impetus is gone."

A congregation at Snowden, Saskatchewan, was organized in 1933 with a charter membership of fourteen adults and sixteen children. The work here was a heartbreak for pastors. In September of the same year, the Rev. A. E. Eriksson organized Elim Church of Miquelon Lake, Alberta, with fourteen communicants and twenty-one children. This congregation never did join the Conference and was eventually merged with the Kingman congregation. In November, 1935, Augustana Lutheran Church of Polwarth was organized.

Dr. Anton Nelson recalls, "I had high hopes at one time for a parish comprised of three or four points—Polwarth, Canwood, Valbrand and Shell Lake. The response was encouraging in the whole area and if an aggressive pastor had been available to serve those communities when Polwarth was organized, we might have had a Lutheran center which would compare favorably with the Camrose area."

The only congregation to survive these years is Central Lutheran Church of Regina. Here work was begun in 1928 when Miss Edna Johnson started canvassing the field. First services were conducted by Dr. Nelson in November, 1930. It was not until November, 1931, that permanent work was begun with the establishment of a Sunday school under the direction of Miss Edna Johnson. In September, 1932, the Rev. John E. Samuelson was called to take charge of the field, and on January 5, 1933, Dr. A. A. Nelson presided at the meeting when the United Lutheran Church of Regina was organized with a communicant membership of 29. The establishment of a new city congregation in Saskatchewan bore out Dr. Nelson's determined interest in urban areas. In his address to the Conference convention in 1931, he stated: "The cities are the principal centres for our home mission work because many of our countrymen settle either in places remote from our congregations or spread themselves out as individual families or as groups among other nationalities where there is little prospect of Lutheran activity. In this way our Church suffers loss. Our only prospect for the future in such areas is the use of the language of the land."

As indicated by Pastor Nelson's remarks, the language question was still a live issue during these years. However, Swedish was making a gradual exit from the scene. In the mid-thirties sixty percent of the Conference's work was being done in the English language. This compared very favourably with the figures for other Lutheran Synods. Augustana had the greatest English emphasis. In 1933, the Conference minutes were printed in Swedish for the last time. In 1936 only one congregation still operated an all Swedish program. Seven were all English and the rest were bilingual.

In 1930, another attempt was made to organize a colonization committee. There was the promise of fresh emigration from Sweden and the Conference deemed it wise to be prepared for the influx. A "Swedish Lutheran Immigration Aid Society of Canada" was organized with the Rev. Anton A. Nelson as chairman. The organization had no official connection with the Canada Conference. The onslaught of the depression ended the activities of that society.

FIRST VISITS TO CANADA  
BY AUGUSTANA PASTORS

*Pastor T. N. Hasselquist, the first president of the Augustana Lutheran Church (1860-1870), led the first known visit to Canada by a group of Augustana pastors in June, 1883.*



*Pastor L. A. Hokanzon, itinerant missionary for the Minnesota Conference, made visits to Canada in the 1880's.*

CHURCHES — HUMBLE



*Fridhem, Fleming, Manitoba.*



*Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church.  
Vancouver, B.C.*



*Elim, Buchanan, Saskatchewan.*

*First Swedish, Vancouver (Princess St.), B.C.*

ASTATELY — WHICH BELONG TO OUR PAST



*An assembly of the pioneers at Fridhem, Camrose, Alberta.*

CHURCH INTERIORS  
OF SOME YEARS AGO  
ALL HAVE SINCE  
BEEN CHANGED



*Elim, Theodore, Saskatchewan.*



*Elim, Buchanan, Saskatchewan.*



*Bethel, Marchwell, Saskatchewan.*



*Augustana, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.*



*Dr. Anton A. Nelson, who gave 32 years (1924-1956) to the Canada Conference as parish pastor, Superintendent of Missions, Conference President and Regional Director of Canadian Missions.*

AUGUSTANA'S BOARD OF AMERICAN MISSIONS  
HAS INVESTED MUCH IN CANADA



*Dr. T. A. Gustafson, past president of the Board, Dr. Theodore E. Matson, executive director, Dr. N. Everett Hedeen, president.*



*Dr. Henry J. Hokenson,  
treasurer.*



*Pastor L. Floyd Lewis,  
Regional Director for  
Canada (1957-1960).*



*Pastor Donald W. Sjoberg  
now Regional Director for  
Canada*

## THE CONFERENCE GROWS



*Organization of Grace Canadian Lutheran Church, Broadview, Saskatchewan — April 3, 1955.*



*As four congregations are received into the Canada Conference—Convention in Regina, April 13, 1955*

## BEFORE AND AFTER, IN BUILDING PROJECTS

*Immanuel, Port Arthur, Ontario, now has worshipful  
sanctuary after many years in its basement.*



*Augustana, Saskatoon, built in the depth of the  
depression, is in the midst of giving substance  
to the architect's drawing.*



*Central Lutheran Church, Regina, Sask. Site Dedication  
— April, 1955. Building Dedication — March 30, 1958.*



IMPROVEMENTS IN PARSONAGE PROPERTY ARE BEING MADE  
IN CITY AND COUNTRY



*First, Calgary, Alberta.*



*Bethany, Norman, Ontario.*



*Trinity, Stavely, Alberta.*



*Elim, Theodore, Saskatchewan.*



*St. Paul's, Haney, B.C.*



*Central, Regina, Sask.*

CHURCHES HERE AND THERE IN THE CONFERENCE



*Augustana, Edmonton—while parish education unit was under construction.*



*Trinity, Stavely, Alberta.*



*Messiah, Assiniboia, Sask.*



*Zion, Fort Frances, Ontario.*

## RECENT NEW MISSION DEVELOPMENTS



*Messiah, Calgary, worships in parsonage chapel, 1955.*



*Dedication of first unit at Messiah, Calgary, 1958.*



*Organization Service — Calvary, Atikokan, Ontario, November 30, 1958.*



*Reception of Calvary, Atikokan, into the Canada Conference at the Convention in New Stockholm, May, 1959.*



*Pastor Dean Berg commissioned as Board Missionary at Gloria Dei, North Vancouver, May 14, 1961.*



*First Unit of Christ Lutheran Church, Edmonton.*

CANADIAN PASTORS FOR CANADIAN PARISHES



*Lutheran College and Seminary Class of 1952, together with the professors—The class includes brothers Paul and Harold Eriksson, the first Augustana pastors to get all their education in Canada.*



*Pastor Vincent Eriksson, ordained at Czar, Alberta, June 9, 1957.*



*Pastor Ferdy E. Baglo, ordained at New Westminster, B.C. May 25, 1958.*



*Pastor Morris Green, installed at the Lutheran Church of The Cross, Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba, July, 1959.*

CANADA  
CONFERENCE  
PERSONALITIES



Pastor Vernon Sundmark  
Secretary



Pastor Otto A. Olson, Jr.  
President



Pastor and Mrs. Otto Eklund



Miss Connie Landstrom is inducted as parish worker at Central, Regina, February, 1942.



Sister Minnie Carlson, matron  
of the Canada Conference Home  
for the Aged at Wetaskiwin, Alberta.



Pastor Alfred B. Sander, Vice-President  
conducts the rite of installation of Pastor  
R. K. Hasley at St. Mark's, Winnipeg,  
July 1961



Pastor C. Robert Pearson, Dean of the  
Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute.



## THE AUXILIARIES



*Luther League—at Leadership School,  
Luther College, Regina.*



*Augustana Lutheran Church Women,  
Canada Conference Officers  
front row—Mrs. A. Forslund, Secy.  
Mrs. R. Norling, Service chairman  
(general ALCW)  
back row—Mrs. V. Swanlund, Treasurer  
Mrs. A. Sander, Vice-President  
Mrs. K. G. Morgenroth, President.*



*The Canadian Lutheran Bible  
Institute aids our youth and  
strengthens our Conference*



*Churchmen,  
Canada Conference Officers:  
Pastor Robert Ek, advisor  
Mr. Herbert Kreuger, Vice-Pres.  
Mr. John Weltstein, Pres.  
Mr. Larry Martin, Secy.*

## MEMORABLE MOMENTS



*The Canadian Delegation at the 1957 Synod of the Church at Omaha, Nebraska.*

*Luther Leaguers in British Columbia win second prize with a float in a Vancouver parade.*



*A Cairn is dedicated in the New Stockholm community in Saskatchewan by Dr. Oscar A. Benson, then president of the Augustana Lutheran Church. May 29, 1959.*





Coming!

## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

*Dr. Malvin H. Lundein, president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, serves as chairman of the Joint Commission on Lutheran Unity, making preparations for the new Church.*



*Presidents and secretaries of the merging churches:*

*United Lutheran Church in America*

*Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church*

*American Evangelical Lutheran Church*

*Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church.*



*The seal of the  
Lutheran Church of America.*

In addition to manpower, "womanpower" was a great assistance to the mission work in Canada through the parish workers supplied by the Synodical Women's Missionary Society. It was a great loss to the Conference when Miss Edna Johnson left in June, 1937, after a decade of service in Canada. She was succeeded by Miss Inez Hedman, however, and this type of assistance was continued. The big blow came in 1934 when the Synodical W.M.S. found it impossible to continue contributing financially to Canadian mission work. Being the lone "ninety-eight percent mission conference in the Synod", the withdrawal of this aid was felt deeply.

During these years an increasing number of students from Augustana and Gustavus Adolphus Colleges were coming to Canada to spend the summer months serving the many vacant congregations. The efforts of these young men kept many a congregation from joining the ranks of the dissolved. These men faced many difficulties and hardships as they endeavoured to pick up the work that had been dormant through the winter, suffusing it with their spirit and energy. The list of these workers is too long to include here but their efforts are not forgotten. An example of what they faced is described by Einar Oberg who served the summer of 1938 in Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba. He wrote the Conference president: "It seems that a short summer is too small a space of time to determine how much has really been accomplished since a good half of the summer must be spent in trying to bring the people back into the habit of going regularly to church. The gap between summer and summer again is too large and consequently such forces that are of the evil nature have too long a time to work on the young folks. The young folks are just beginning to show a great interest in church work and now the summer is at a close and no one to guide them and to help them to keep their faith up when going becomes tough as it is bound to do." Oberg submitted that it will take "someone with a lot of drive and much real living faith in God" to establish the church more securely in the community. At this time, the hard times combined with the vacancy problem to create an almost impossible situation. The student who faced the work needed a strong faith and the power of endurance. William Hyllengren who served the same congregation in the summer of 1935 found the people eager for student-help and responding well to his ministry.

The first of many interns to come to Canada under the Seminary intern arrangement was Mr. Ernie Holm who arrived to work in Alberta in 1937. Like many of the interns to follow him, his experiences in Canada led him to accept a call to the Canadian field upon his ordination.

The year 1932 witnessed the birth of an institution which was to contribute a great deal toward Christian education in Canada. In November of that year, the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute was organized in Camrose, Alberta under the auspices of four Lutheran bodies, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Danish United Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church and the Canada Conference of the Augustana Synod. Sixty students were enrolled during the fall term and eighty during the winter. President Nelson, addressing the Conference Convention in 1933, commented, "It has been an inspiration to learn of the interest which has been manifested in the study of the Word of God . . . We hope that the young men and women who have found their Saviour during these weeks at the Bible Institute may prove to be a spiritual force in our Church. We also rejoice over the exemplary spirit of our Lutheran people evidenced by the liberal donation to the school, a sum of very nearly \$1,000 through free will contributions." And this was during the depth of the depression!

Canada Conference pastors and people were to play an important role in the history of C.L.B.I. The Rev. C. Bernhardson became Dean of the institution in 1939 and continued in that office almost until his death in 1942.

In recent years, the Rev. C. Robert Pearson has been full time instructor at the Institute and in 1957 assumed the office of Dean. Students from the school have played a significant part in the life of the Conference, some entering the ministry, others parish work and world missions.

The Canada mission area had never suffered from lack of publicity in the Church press and publications. It is remarkable how many articles on the work in Canada are extant. During the 'thirties the Church press produced a significant number of items about Canada. Unfortunately, not all the stories that reached the pages of the "*Lutheran Companion*" told the whole story. It was only natural for writers to emphasize the unique and unusual, and this often resulted in a false notion of primitive conditions being general in Canada.

Dr. S. J. Sebelius, who visited Canada during the summer of 1935, wrote: "The immense distances between places in Canada is a thing that first impresses a visitor from the Middle and Eastern States. It would be no fun to get stuck in the night on a 'soupy' mud road with no gas in the tank and the nearest filling station 25 or 50 miles away! Try it once! Our own home missionaries could spin you a tale or two on that topic, and still show no excitement. It's all in a day's work, and a 'soft creature' won't do as a missionary, certainly not in Canada . . ." Dr. Sebelius arrived in Shaunavon on June 20th, "after thirty-five hours' ride on the train and thirty-five miles in a Ford on mud roads in a pouring rain." Sebelius recollected, "We made it in three and a half hours. The Ford acted 'dizzy' every ten or fifteen minutes and made for the deep ditches in the darkness of the night. But, (Pastor J. H.) Larson held the 'boy' to the road and remarked so cheerfully, 'Lots of people are glad for this rain. We needed it so badly'."

Dr. Sebelius had come to address three successive District Luther League conventions. He was amazed at the turnout despite the desperate roads and weather conditions. From Shaunavon, Sebelius journeyed to Percival where "the service was held in the afternoon with a goodly attendance of people, most of them 'Jamtlanningar'." He wrote, "This congregation has contributed two sons to the holy ministry, viz., Nels Norbeck . . . and Edward Vikberg . . ." Next stop was Stockholm. "Our service was well attended, especially by men, both young and old. Surely, an inspiring sight! They all sat on one side of the church, and it looked like a Brotherhood meeting. On the other side of the church a few families and some women folk gave a more modern aspect to the assembly. The visit was altogether enjoyable. The service was concluded at 10:10 p.m., and it was still daylight!"

Canada's undeserved reputation among many Americans for being the "Siberia" of North America was enhanced by the appearance of the following item on the editorial page of the "*Lutheran Companion*" in 1938. Under the heading, "Pathetic Plea from Canada", Editor E. E. Ryden wrote: "From the Rev. J. A. Vikman of Edmonton, Alberta, comes the following letter, written by a young woman living on the bleak prairies of Wapiti, Alberta: 'We are a group of Lutherans settled out on homestead here at Wapiti. We are eighteen miles from the nearest town, Wembley, and most of us are too poor to own radios. So we find the dark winter evenings very, very long. We have talked the matter over and decided to write to the nearest Lutheran pastor and to ask for some reading material such as old magazines. I am sure that in a city congregation there are many who would contribute a few old magazines or other good periodicals. We would be willing to send postage. Hope this request will not inconvenience you too much.' The letter was signed, 'Violet G. Sundin'. We reproduce it here for two reasons. First, in order that readers may have an opportunity to respond to this rather pathetic request from the far north . . . and secondly, we publish this letter because we believe it will help to portray

conditions on some of our home mission fields better than two or three well-written articles or elaborate lectures."

The editor's intentions were good, but this and succeeding articles tended to increase the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of mission work in Canada. It is true that conditions were different from those in many parts of the United States, but the contrast was not as drastic as these particular published instances seemed to indicate.

Two anniversaries were celebrated by the Canada Conference during this decade. In 1933, the observation of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Conference was held in connection with the annual convention at Calgary, Alberta. The Rev. John Samuelson prepared one of the first over-all histories of Augustana work on the Canadian prairies and it was read at the observance. In 1938, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Conference was heralded in the same city and the Rev. C. Bernhardson prepared a follow-up history of the Conference. At this convention, Dr. P. A. Mattson, president of the Minnesota Conference, was guest speaker. It had been one of his first duties as Minnesota Conference president twenty-five years before to chair the organization meeting of the Canada Conference. The anniversary convention was to be remembered for a number of reasons. Bertil Erling, reporting to the "*Lutheran Companion*", told why.

"Because the Canada Conference usually must hold its conventions rather early in the spring in order to accommodate delegates from the farm constituencies, the weather is oftentimes an important factor; but never before had the weather been such a disturbing factor as it was this time. On Monday and Tuesday of convention week the worst storm in decades swept out of the northwest across Alberta and Saskatchewan, piling drifts across highways and railroad right-of-ways, stalling cars and trains, causing great loss for cattle owners, but also bringing much needed precipitation in the drought areas and the best promises of a good season for years. Six delegates on a Canadian National train from Saskatoon were held up fifty-three hours at Oyen, Alberta, when a snow plow and two locomotives ahead of them turned over trying to push through twenty-five foot drifts. Two other delegates were delayed for shorter periods, but the two delegates from Scandia, Alberta, who had promised to bring turkeys along to assist the ladies of the Calgary Church in providing for the physical needs of the delegation, could not come at all. The full delegation was not in attendance until Friday morning which naturally was a great hindrance to the conduct of business . . . ."

Dr. Bersell was present for the anniversary convention. His "cheerful spirit, boundless energy and kindly advice" inspired the delegates. Wrote Erling: "In his greeting, Dr. Bersell clearly reminded us that the Canadians have not been forgotten by their brethren in the States; of the money actually disbursed in the last few years by the Synodical Home Missions Board, half has been sent to Canada."

Throughout the 'thirties, the Rev. Anton A. Nelson campaigned courageously for increasing stewardship responsibility among members of the Conference churches. The financial affairs of the Conference were frequently in desperate shape and required straight talking on the part of the president. Dr. Nelson told the 1936 convention, "Systems vary from the 'weekly envelope' (the ideal system), the 'monthly or annual pledge', the antiquated 'per communicant', the 'pay if you please', the 'Get it if you can', the 'No pay', and the 'Bankrupt' system." We are told again and again by pastors and members of the laity alike that the Conference dues are too high; that the leaders of our churches are unwilling to report the correct membership or that they favor having 'sociable' or 'associate' members in order to evade these immense sums to the Conference. In the first place we would challenge the few who complain to cite any church

body which asks for less of a financial sacrifice than our Conference . . . Is there any member in our Conference who will find himself in financial straits because he places a penny a day on God's altar to keep his own church open for worship and helps to keep the doors open to our charitable and educational institutions? That is all that our Conference is asking to adequately finance the work . . ."

In his own inimitable style of good humour mixed with serious talk, Pastor Nelson continued his stewardship campaign. His efforts appear to have been rewarded to some extent, for two years later, he reported, "Our treasurer's report is the most encouraging financial document which has been submitted to our Conference for more than a decade. We are far from our goal, but we appreciate, as it were, small favours. Twenty-five congregations have met their apportionment in full . . ."

It was Rev. Nelson, too, who challenged the Conference to enter a new media of spreading the Gospel. As revolutionary as TV is today, radio was in the 'thirties. "The remarkable invention of modern times, the radio, is often a powerful tool of Satan. It is a great force to bring worldliness into our homes, as it is almost monopolized by the big companies which through their high-pressure salesmen are advertising floor wax, carpet sweepers, tooth paste, hair tonics, skin lotions, chewing gum, tobacco, shows, dances, beer and the like. May the radio also become an instrument in the hands of God in bringing the Gospel of Christ into our homes . . . We would urge our city churches in particular, whenever possible, to arrange for this type of missionary work . . ."

There were many problems facing the pastors and people of the churches. Dr. Nelson summarized them in his president's report for 1935. "Distractions such as dancing, drinking, card playing and lodgism are referred to by several pastors; desecration of the Lord's day is prevalent in many cases; the problem of transportation which is a serious problem within the bounds of our Arctic Conference, even to the lover of the Word, due to the heavy snowfall in certain localities during the long winter and lack of funds to operate a car during these years of depression, has seriously affected at least half of the fields; and spiritual indifference is reported as more or less cancerous infection in all the reports with an odd exception."

Despite the problems, the ministry of the Church was making progress among the young as Luther Leaguers became a leaven in many congregations. Bible Conferences were held in connection with conventions. The emphasis on inner growth by means of the Word and Sacraments was bearing fruit.

In one congregation in Ontario near the Indian reservations a number of part-Indians were among the most loyal and active members. "We even have Indian squaws at our ladies' aids," reported the pastor of that time. Pastor Axel Berg writing in his little book "On the Borderline" describes attending the Ladies' Aid meeting which "was really a mid-week service". He says when they meet "there is a cup of coffee for everybody, with home-cured meats, and fish and Canadian wild berries, cake and cookies and other things that go with the coffee when such hardy and husky woodspeople get together."

Two pastors died during the decade. The Rev. J. P. Nordstrom who had served Calgary from 1919 to 1924 and Kinistino from 1924 to 1931, died in Calgary in 1933 after a lingering illness. In 1937, a man who had spent a great part of his life serving the congregations of Canada, first as a student and later as an ordained pastor, the Rev. Axel Eriksson, passed away in Edmonton. He was buried in the Fridhem cemetery at Camrose.

One of the great issues to face the Canada Conference during these years was the new Synodical plan for home missions. Texas and Canada were the only Conferences voting against it. Dr. Nelson writes: "It is no secret that I, as Conference president, together with the other members of the Conference

Board, at the time exercised our influence to gain a negative vote. We felt that it would definitely curb our independence as a Conference and curtail our efforts in conducting the type of work which we deemed necessary. Today, even as we confessed to Dr. P. O. Bersell and the staff of the Board of American Missions after having observed how the work was conducted under the present Board of American Missions, we see that we were in error in opposing the new plan."

The new plan went through, and the Canada Conference lost its president of twelve years standing. Dr. Anton A. Nelson was called to be the first Regional Director for the Board of American Missions in Canada. A new era of mission endeavour was about to begin.

## *Chapter VIII*

### OUTPOST IN FRENCH CANADA

The head of the Great Lakes, at Port Arthur and Fort William, is the eastern-most centre of Augustana work in Canada at the present time. In the extreme west, the Columbia Conference was at work in British Columbia; on the prairies, the Canada Conference laboured; in the north woods of Ontario, the Minnesota Conference had a sprinkling of congregations. It is not commonly known that Augustana did have a foothold in the French Canadian province of Quebec at one time.

Montreal has been a centre of immigration work in Canada for many years. To this day the Canada Committee of the Lutheran World Federation maintains a port worker in this city, meeting new immigrants. It was often the point of arrival for immigrants from Sweden. Here a small colony began to form in the early years of the century. In 1917, the Canada Conference president observed in his report to the annual convention, "That we gratefully acknowledge the Swedish Consulate which has been established in Montreal by King Gustav the V for the help and encouragement of our Swedish people in Canada."

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church of Montreal, P.Q., was organized in 1919. The Rev. Samuel R. Swensson was its pastor during the first year when it ministered to a membership of ninety-four people. The following year Pastor Ragnar Byrenius served the congregation and reported "a feeling in the congregation that only Swedes should belong; no Danes or Norwegians." It is quite obvious that the congregation was strongly nationalistic, not especially strange for a Swedish island in the middle of a French-Canadian ocean. The congregation was a member of the New England Conference; thus, another Augustana Conference joined in Canadian mission work. The congregation required \$900 aid during 1920. The suggestion was made that the congregation should merge with an English Lutheran Church and that the new merged church affiliate with Augustana. Evidently such a plan failed to materialize.

The interest dropped suddenly in 1921 when only thirty-three members were reported, but the following year Gustavus Adolphus congregation reported an increase in membership to eighty-nine. Student W. J. Bjorkman worked in the field during these years. The congregation was dropped from the Conference statistics in 1923.

Dr. S. G. Youngert, professor at the Augustana Seminary in Rock Island, was called to spend a summer in Montreal and asked to study the situation. He was also asked to study the advisability of beginning a seaman's mission in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He reported in 1925, "not much hope for the congregation. Pastor Castling, who served there three months, agreed." Scandinavians and Finns were present at the meeting, wrote Dr. Youngert. The New England Conference voted at its 1925 convention to ask the Synod to plan for an immigrant and seaman's home in Montreal.

It seems that nothing much developed from these moves on the part of the New England Conference. It was not until 1929 that the Synod's Board of Missions became interested in the field. Then, they called Dr. Youngert back

to make another survey of the situation. This time, he was asked to ascertain the possibility of starting an immigrant home in Montreal. Evidently the results of his survey must have been satisfactory, for the Rev. Gunnar Goranson was called in 1930 to the "Montreal Immigrant and City Mission". All of these efforts were being carried on in the name of the Synod. Unfortunately, Pastor Goranson was not to have a lengthy ministry in Montreal. He left in May 1932 after many months of hard work attempting to build up the congregation. The depression made it difficult for the Board of Missions to maintain the annual grant of from \$3,000 to \$4,000. The Synod meeting was told that "Mr. John Sutherland of the theological seminary has been called to serve Montreal for the summer months."

The plan of getting student service helped to keep the congregation alive and results during the summer of 1932 were favourable. Services were held on Sunday evenings in rented quarters with an average attendance of thirty-five. There was no Sunday school. It was admitted that the work in Montreal was still in an experimental stage.

Another opportunity came in September, 1933, when the Rev. Wilbert Benson accepted the call and came to serve the congregation in Montreal. His youthful enthusiasm sparked the congregation. However, "The Swedish colony seems more interested in Swedish culture than in the Word of God", the pastor noted. Pastor Benson directed his attention to another area of work. He and the Danish Lutheran pastor in Montreal, working in different parts of the city, were endeavouring to start English missions. The efforts were to no avail, however, and very reluctantly Pastor Benson took leave of the field on October 1, 1934. He left to attend Yale Divinity School for post-graduate work. However, his interest in the Montreal field prevented him from deserting the work entirely, and on his own initiative he visited the city on a number of occasions in order to conduct services of worship.

It is interesting to note that the election of a Liberal government in Canada was held up as the possible key to mission work in the area! The Synod president told the convention in 1935, "The Swedish Colony has never been large and those who stop in the city for a while usually move on to other parts of the Dominion or to the States. For some time there has been no immigration to Canada and consequently nothing to do in the way of immigrant mission. If the Liberal Party should win in the coming election in the Dominion the doors will again be open to immigrants according to the platform of that party."

The Liberal Party was elected to power, but Prime Minister Mackenzie King's coming to office brought about no change in the Montreal situation. The Synod, discouraged by the results of the work in Canada's largest city, turned the responsibility of mission work there back to the New England Conference. Two years of vacancy followed, after which Pastor Zack Menton received a call to the congregation. His ministry was evidently a brief one.

In 1937 the congregation at Montreal reported 113 confirmed members and thirty-five children. It had received \$450 aid in 1936 and contributed nothing to the Conference in return. One thousand dollars aid was requested for 1937. The Mission Board recommended that the Conference "discontinue interest in the field by July 1, 1937". The Conference resolved: "(a) That the Conference discontinue having a resident missionary in Gustaf Adolf, Montreal, field by August 1, 1937; (b) That the question of vice-pastor for this field be left to the Lutheran Board of Missions."

The congregation was reported sporadically for some years until in 1942 the Conference statistician made the fatal announcement: "We have this year eliminated Gustavus Adolphus, Montreal, Canada. The reason for this is that we are unable to get any contact with this field."

It was a sorry adventure into eastern Canadian missions. Undoubtedly, the great distance from any other Augustana congregation prevented Gustavus Adolphus from enjoying the fellowship and strength derived from close association with neighbouring churches and this, too, may have contributed to her demise. A congregation in Toronto, Ontario, inquired about joining the Canada Conference in later years, but was referred to the Canada Synod of the United Lutheran Church whose work is concentrated in this area.

## *Chapter IX*

### WAR AND AFTERMATH

In its short history, the Canada Conference has suffered from the influences of consequences of two world wars. When World War II began for Canada in 1939, mission activity was virtually forced to a standstill. The coming decade was to be one of "holding the fort". However, the War brought about some advances; this was particularly true in the matter of Lutheran co-operation. It was in this period that the seed was sown for a Canadian Lutheran Council, and Augustana began to participate in theological education in western Canada.

The War, with its demands on manpower and the economy, made a lot of changes in the church situation at home. Many of our Lutheran men were in uniform, many of our women in factories. Immediately after the Second World War broke upon Europe in all its fury, a respected member of one of our country congregations made the following remark: "It's safer these days to sit on a binder in Canada than on a throne in Europe."

Gas rationing, the rubber shortage and other problems introduced by the war made the ministry to large parishes almost impossible. The weather did not help matters in 1942. One pastor in explaining the reason for his delay in sending Dr. Nelson his reports said, "The hopeless, very severe alarming winter is partly, at least, at fault . . . Riding in an open sleigh all day while Mr. Winter was riding the roads at forty-six below zero with a strong wind, and snow-blocked roads. All winter horses have climbed snow drifts and rolled and fought in snow to a degree that is definitely unbelievable unless you are an eyewitness. I have seen drifts fifteen feet deep. On January 20th it was sixty-five below zero here and following that date from forty-five to fifty-five below for several days. We are nevertheless trying to meet for services both in the churches and in the homes."

While the war and the weather plagued the workers left to minister in the Canadian field, two wartime "babies" were born to the Conference. In 1940, Bethlehem Lutheran of Laclu, Ontario, was organized due to the missionary efforts of Pastor Theodore Larson of Kenora. "Without any home mission aid, he undertook the additional responsibility of conducting a Sunday school in the Laclu school. The thriving Sunday school was the key which unlocked the door to congregational work," wrote Dr. Anton Nelson in a "*Companion*" article titled "The Last Church for the Duration". The people even succeeded under wartime conditions to erect a humble church building. The church was dedicated November 22, 1942. The other wartime organization took place at Rolling Hills, Alberta, where the work of the Rev. Ernie Holm was rewarded when Faith congregation came into being in 1942, on March 12th. Student John E. Nelson from the Seminary at Rock Island helped prepare the way for the organization with his efforts during the summer of 1941. A Vacation Bible School captured the interest of the community, but a polio (then called infantile paralysis) epidemic forced the classes to conclude before the two weeks were over. The congregation continued to be served by summer students for some years.

Brooks and Stavely, Alberta, and Wadena, Saskatchewan, were under the watchful eye of the Regional Director, awaiting the time when some kind of

work might begin there. The war prevented any serious implementation of mission activity. It was quite enough work to keep the established congregations in touch with one another and with the Synod. Circumstances were such that some pastors were serving as many as nineteen preaching places, holding services at all hours of the day, all days of the week, and in schoolhouses, chapels and farm homes.

The end of the war did not mark the end of problems for the Canada Conference. The area still suffered from the lack of pastoral care and lay leadership. Missionary Daniel Friberg who visited Canada near the war's end wrote: "Having recently spent about a month among some of our Canadian congregations I am moved to urge the entire constituency of the Synod to give earnest consideration to this expansive northern mission field of our Church. A vacancy is perhaps nowhere within the home or North American field of our Synod so weighty a matter as when it occurs in the Canada Conference. In one vacant church, able to boast the finest property possessed by any Augustana group in Canada, I preached to the smallest Sunday morning congregation I ever remember addressing: four men plus the organist. Happily the evening turn-out was better, but how this place needs a pastor."

The problem was recognized by every visitor to Canada but there seemed no solution; it continued to plague the Conference. The same year that Daniel Friberg visited Canada, the Regional Director addressed the following words to the Canada Conference in convention.

"At the present time definite plans are in the making for the establishment of more than twenty-five new missions in our Synod during the current year (1945). We deplore that none of these are contemplated for our Conference. But, as we have pointed out both to our Conference and the Board of Home Missions on various occasions, it is not the fault of our Director's staff or the missionaries on the field, nor is it the lack of opportunity for expansion, but it is entirely due to the fact that we are so thoroughly undermanned."

Ten pastors and one lay preacher were in the service of the entire Canada Conference at this time. Despite the situation, the Board of Home Missions appointed Miss Doris Quarnstrom to make surveys in Saskatoon, Edmonton, Wetaskiwin and Regina during 1945.

At a youth rally for Lutherans of all synods held in Regina, July 1940, the Canada Conference Luther League came into being with the Rev. E. T. Holm as its first elected president. District Leagues had been organized since the 'twenties, but now a need for a Conference-wide organization was felt. Two Luther Leaguers attending the 1946 Conference Luther League Convention in Kenora, Ontario, met a tragic death in an automobile accident. In the company of some other leaguers, Miss Meta Nervick and Mr. Roger Zakrison of Stockholm, Sask., were driving through a thick fog when their car suddenly plunged off the end of a pier. Leaguers across Canada established a fund in memory of the two. Some of the money collected was used to provide scholarship help for young men preparing for the holy ministry, and some eventually was used to furnish the Conference president's office in the administration building of the Lutheran College and Seminary at Saskatoon. An inscribed plaque on the door of the office records the permanent memorial.

After many years of saving money and making plans, the Conference Old People's Home came into existence in 1942. A plot 150 by 200 with a three storey house was purchased in Wetaskiwin for \$2,750. The former Children's Home Fund and Old People's Home Fund had been merged and the monies used for this purpose. The house was renovated, decorated and dedicated in 1943, but it was not until September of that year that it was opened for guests. Miss Lily Tunem was the first matron and Mr. N. A. Carlson the first caretaker. Mrs. Lovisa Lindbloom from Camrose was the first guest. The Home

could care for only nine guests and after three years of operation was filled to capacity. An army hut, 24 by 120 feet, was purchased in 1947 and renovated at a cost of \$14,000. On October 31, 1948 this new building was dedicated, offering room for eighteen additional guests. The Lutheran Home for the Aged was now a firmly established institution in Wetaskiwin and a part of the social mission responsibility of the Conference.

When Dr. Anton A. Nelson assumed the role of Regional Director for the Canada Conference in 1939 the election of a new president was necessitated. The Rev. J. Arvid Vikman was elected and he served until 1947. Professor Gilbert Monson, Augustana instructor at the Lutheran College and Seminary succeeded him in 1947.

Three Conference pastors died during this decade. The Rev. O. H. Miller, serving the Marchwell-Churchbridge parish, died in 1940 and was buried in the Marchwell cemetery. He had served the Church in Canada since 1925. On May 28, 1947, Pastor Carl A. Bernhardson was released from suffering. He had been ill for many years. He had come to Canada in 1932 upon ordination to serve the Czar-Amisk parish. In 1938 he moved to Camrose, Alberta, and became the Dean of the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute. He served for some years as Conference secretary. In 1946, he resigned the office of Dean of C.L.B.I. but continued teaching until the end. The Scandia parish was shocked by the sudden death of their young pastor, Paul H. Swenson, in 1949. This beloved man was only twenty-nine years of age and had endeared himself to his parishioners during his four year ministry.

Through the years the Conference has occasionally found itself involved in real estate dealings. The forty acres which originally belonged to the Fleming congregation in southeastern Saskatchewan was turned over to the Conference and the title secured in 1949. The land was sold. In 1949, Mr. F. O. Floberg of Randolph, Kansas, transferred a half-section of farmland near Minnedosa, Manitoba, to the Conference with the understanding that a nominal annuity would be paid until the donor's death when the net proceeds from the sale would be divided equally between the Home for the Aged Fund and the Seminary Fund. Mr. Gotfrid Johnson of Erickson, Manitoba, was appointed by the Board to act as its agent in managing the farm.

One of the glorious events of the decade was the unexpected and inspiring response to the Centennial Appeal. The Conference had in 1943 set the ambitious goal of \$24,000. Dr. C. E. Hoffsten of Winnipeg was director of the appeal. The Conference President said, "There were indeed few, if any, who thought that it would be an easy matter to reach the goal; many were doubtful as to the outcome; and not a few considered the amount beyond the possibility of attainment. Now that the goal has been reached and passed, we hear comments like these: 'It was such a blessed and easy task. It was never easier to raise funds for any purpose. We were surprised at the response of those who we did not count on to contribute'."

The Conference pledged and contributed \$25,345 to the Appeal. The response was indicative of a new spirit of stewardship in the Conference. It was during this period that an upward trend in the Conference finances began. The Centennial funds were equally divided between Synod and Conference and the latter used the funds for the purchase of a professor's residence in Saskatoon in the autumn of 1945.

The mission climate was changing, too. The Regional Director reported this to the Conference Conventions during the latter part of the decade. "Originally our mission field was limited to Swedes or at best to the Scandinavians. Today, there are neither racial nor national boundaries. Some of our Canadian churches now report more than ten different nationalities represented in their membership." The Conference president echoed these statements in words that

indicated another important facet of this change. "More than ever before, the Lutheran Church is being granted a respectful hearing. Informed folks are awakening to the fact that we have a message to give in the language of the land. Religious leaders (who ought, indeed, to have known this long ago) have come to acknowledge that we are something very considerably more than a 'sect'."

This new sense of "belonging" on the part of Lutherans, and the generally receptive attitude of people from different denominational backgrounds are characteristic of the situation encountered in the next decade. This was a new trend that would continue and grow.

One of the anecdotes which have become legend in Canada concerning an event which took place during this time involves Dr. Anton Nelson. The story was published in "Maclean's Magazine" on November 15, 1945, as follows: "Much more disturbing was the experience of a Regina clergyman who, home-ward bound after a day of good works among the farmers of his flock, halted for a nap by the edge of the road just outside the normally peaceful village of Summerberry, Saskatchewan.

"He curled up in the front seat of his car and enjoyed the sleep of a sound conscience and a good prairie dinner, when a noise as of thunder close at hand jolted him to wakefulness. With it came a patter as of hard driven hail.

"Again a thunder clap; only this time it was all too easily identifiable as the boom of a shot-gun.

"The clergyman didn't stop to seek a meaning for the gunplay. He got out of there fast. He was still burning the highway when an R.C.M.P. patrol flagged him down and pretty grim the Mounties looked.

"After a few uncomfortable minutes it was all made clear. There'd been an attempted robbery in Summerberry and when the villagers spotted the parson's darkened car by the roadside, they decided it was the burglar's get-away vehicle so a shot-gun-packing posse went into action as above reported.

"Posses and Mounties — gun smoke and flying lead — and still they say that the Old West has passed."

A legend told and re-told at Augustana Seminary concerns a visit Dr. Nelson made to the institution when on one of his annual "recruiting" drives for pastors to man the vacant Canadian churches. At the chapel, Dr. Nelson painted the dramatic portrayal of a vast land of frontier settlements desperately needing personnel to man the spiritual battle stations. His passionate appeal ended, Dr. Nelson sat down and the vocalist arose with a look of consternation on his face. The assembled congregation of future pastors could hardly contain their amusement when the soloist broke forth with the song, "A Voice Crying in the Wilderness".

#### LUTHERAN CO-OPERATION

The Canada Conference, small as it is in relation to other major Lutheran groups in Canada, has played a significant role in the moulding of inter-Lutheran work in Canada. Perhaps it was the size of the Augustana constituency in Canada that helped the Conference to see the importance and advantage of Lutheran cooperation in the Dominion. Cooperative work began in earnest with the establishment of a Canadian Committee of the American Lutheran Conference bodies.

In the Queen City of Regina, on December 9 and 10, 1931, a meeting was called by the presidents of the five general bodies comprising the American Lutheran Conference. Four of the presidents attended the meeting in Regina, together with representatives from these respective bodies at work in Canada. Pastor J. A. Vikman, Winnipeg; Pastor J. E. Samuelson, Calgary; Mr. F. J.

Pohlman of Shaunavon; and Dr. Nelson, represented Augustana. This meeting gave rise to the Commission on Canadian affairs which was in operation for a period of years and which sponsored the "Lutheran Voice", an inter-Lutheran news magazine.

In 1935 an education committee was established and in 1937 this committee prepared a proposal to set before the church bodies they represented. "Be it resolved that (prior to the publishing of Canadian S.S. materials) we petition that the editorial policy of the various Sunday school publications of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference be sufficiently enlarged and modified as to give more consideration to the Canadian viewpoint, or better, that all articles referring either to Canadian or American nationalism be eliminated as far as possible."

A Canadian consciousness was growing up among the districts in Canada. The complaint against the Sunday school papers was to be repeated in years to come.

A very significant step was taken by the Commission on Canadian Affairs in 1937. It was reported to the Conference, "The Commission . . . has considered the feasibility and practicability of a joint Lutheran Seminary in Canada at its two recent meetings. The following resolution was adopted at the Third Biennial convention of the American Lutheran Conference last November, 'In view of the Commission's statement concerning a future United Canadian Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Conference requests the Commission on Canadian affairs seriously to study the possibility of a joint theological seminary as a first step toward such a United Canadian Lutheran Church."

The same churches cooperating in the American Lutheran Conference made plans for and held a mass Luther League Rally in Regina in 1940. Although war had broken out in Europe, the conference was held and declared a success.

But, the war did change many things. Fortunately, or unfortunately, it stunted any further growth of cooperation among the American Lutheran Conference churches in Canada. However, a new and broader cooperation took its place. It is anybody's guess what might have developed from the 1936 declaration of the American Lutheran Conference churches in Canada had the war not laid such plans to rest. Instead, all Lutheran church bodies with work in Canada began a new effort of cooperation.

Rev. A. A. Nelson and Mr. R. Odellberg represented the Canada conference at an important meeting in Winnipeg on April 2, 1940, when the Canadian Lutheran Commission for War Service was organized. Daniel Friberg described the results of this action with these words: "The Lutherans of Canada have done well to realize that they have got to make a common cause of their interests in so unequal a field. They are asserting their rights and proclaiming their message in the face of some misunderstanding and even of some contempt. Thus, I am informed when the Lutherans first asked for representation in the chaplains corps . . . it was officially intimated that Lutheran representation in the services was negligible. The congregations were circularized and our leaders were able to furnish Ottawa with the names of 20,000 Lutheran servicemen. The Dominion government has now commissioned twenty Lutheran chaplains."

This was only the beginning of the cooperation that Augustana was to enter into with other Lutheran groups. In 1942, a regional Home Mission Council was organized for Canada, entrusted with the responsibility of ironing out wrinkles in the home mission plans of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council. This led to a Home Mission Conference at Saskatoon in July, 1944. At this conference far-reaching resolutions were made.

"1. We recognize that there is unity of doctrine among the Lutheran Synods of Canada here represented, and that this has been sufficiently set forth by the doctrinal pronouncements heretofore adopted by the General Bodies. 2. Upon the basis of this recognized unity of faith, and in the conviction that the work of the Kingdom of God would be furthered by such a step, we look forward to the ultimate establishment of one Lutheran Church in Canada. 3. That a Canadian Lutheran Council be organized similar to the National Lutheran Council in the United States, and that all Lutheran bodies doing work in Canada be invited and urged to become members of this council."

Lutheran leaders from all over North America met in Winnipeg, Manitoba, April 5-6, 1945 to draft a constitution for the Canadian Lutheran Council. The Canada Conference was called upon to elect an official representative of the Conference to serve on the Council as soon as it was organized. Representatives at this meeting were pastors A. A. Nelson and J. Arvid Vikman with layman Mr. R. G. Sackrison. At the 1945 convention the Conference voted to become a participating body of the Canadian Lutheran Council. It was not until December 4, 1952, after several delays, that the Council became a reality. The Rev. G. Uno Lundmark became the first Augustana councillor and the first secretary of the Canadian Lutheran Council.

At the annual convention of the Canada Conference in 1951 another important step was taken. President Gilbert T. Monson remarked: "I have long been of the settled opinion that our Conference, though admittedly one of the smallest of the Canadian contingents of international Lutheran general bodies, ought to try to lead the way in substituting action for unofficial talk and an abundance of wishful thinking. It is rather amusing to discover that amongst pastors we hear it said that the laity is not ready, and that our laity, on the other hand, express the feeling that it's the pastors who are preventing progress toward union."

As a result of this challenge presented by the Conference president, the convention sent a significant petition to Synod, the first action of its kind to be taken by a Canadian administrative unit in this matter. "We herewith petition the Augustana Lutheran Church to outline procedures by which the Canada Conference through its duly elected representatives may enter into negotiations with any or all of the Canadian Lutheran bodies with the aim of establishing a United Lutheran Church in Canada." The Synod replied, "Resolved that, 1. The Canada Conference be encouraged to enter into negotiations with any or all other Canadian Lutheran bodies with the aim in view to establish a United Lutheran Church of Canada. 2. The Canada Conference be requested to report developments of such negotiations to the Church and submit estimates of financial support that may be necessary. 3. Before any final action be taken to participate in a United Lutheran Church of Canada, the plan of merger be submitted to the Augustana Lutheran Church for approval."

A Conference Committee on Lutheran Unity had been elected previously and it was to this group that responsibility for carrying out this decision was given. With the establishment of the Canadian Lutheran Council in 1952, this Committee seemed to go into eclipse, but when "friendly talks" were begun by Lutheran bodies in western Canada, the committee reorganized. These talks were for the purpose of exploring the advisability and feasibility of a Lutheran Church of western Canada. These exploratory talks were, in turn, stalemated, however, when in their place there developed discussions with all Lutheran bodies in Canada. In the fall of 1956, representatives of all the Lutheran groups working in Canada, with the exception of the Lutheran Free Church, met in Kitchener, Ontario, to discuss the possibility of further talks on the subject of Canadian Lutheran unity. The meeting at this time encouraged the churches involved to send regularly accredited delegates to a further meeting in

Regina in the fall of 1957. The meetings have been held annually in Winnipeg since.

Augustana's Canada Conference has continued to play a significant role at these meetings, being one of the few Lutheran bodies to have declared itself officially on the matter of Lutheran unity in Canada.

Augustana has given full support to the Canadian Lutheran Council. Two Augustana pastors are employed full-time in the service of the Council at the time of writing: the Rev. John Vedell as chaplain to University Students in eastern Canada and the Rev. Robert Erickson, assistant to Dr. Earl J. Treusch, Executive Director of the Canadian Lutheran Council. The Rev. Otto A. Olson, Jr., the Canada Conference president has served as secretary and vice-president of the Council, and is now the Council's fourth president.

The Canada Conference has continually shown that it believes it is God's will that Canadian Lutherans unite to work together in one indigenous church in the Dominion. If it is God's will, indeed, then Augustana will have done its part in bringing that will to realization one day when a Canadian Lutheran Church is born. The Canada Conference can never be accused of "dragging its feet" in the matter of Lutheran unity, although it might be accused of "venturing where angels fear to tread" by its outspoken, eager support of the matter.

#### *AN INDIGENOUS MINISTRY*

Even before the organization of a Canada Conference there was a recognition of the fact that an indigenous ministry was desirable, yes, necessary for successful mission work in the Dominion. The Conference school at Percival was an attempt at beginning a training program for Canadian home missionaries. In 1923 an offer from the Lutheran College and Seminary was introduced to the Conference. It was suggested that the Canada Conference establish a Swedish Department at the college. A committee was appointed to investigate but nothing came of the matter. As Dr. Nelson recalls, "The Lutheran College and Seminary of Saskatoon was, I think, very much of an unknown quantity to most of us in the Canada Conference until I took up my residence in Saskatoon. It was no doubt due to the fact that we were Swedes and they were Germans and we had very little in common with them because some of the old German professors were not what you might call public relations men."

An invitation similar to the one from the German Lutherans was extended by the Norwegians but this, too, was turned down on the same grounds, that national emphases were too great for the co-operation to be satisfactory.

In 1924, in a desperate attempt to influence young men graduating from the Rock Island seminary to come northward, the Conference established an aid fund for theological students. Called the "Canada Conference Scholarship" it was for the financial support of students who planned to minister in Canada. Support of the fund was poor and the plan failed.

In 1927, a questionnaire on Christian education was circulated among the conferences and Canada declared its interest in establishing a Bible School for the training of young people. Since cooperative arrangements seemed unattractive, a Conference school was suggested. Once again, the matter of finances entered in and the plan was shelved.

Nothing more developed until the action taken by the Commission on Canadian Affairs of the American Lutheran Conference relative to establishing a joint-Lutheran Seminary in Canada. This suggestion was introduced in 1936 and the Conference wholeheartedly supported it in convention in 1937.

The real steps to cooperative theological education came about in an indirect way. Dr. Anton Nelson writes: "Our first close contacts with the Lutheran College and Seminary came about when Professor Magnus, acting

dean, asked me to teach English Bible at the Seminary. When Dr. N. Willison became dean, our associations became closer week to week as he made overtures to our church."

In 1940, the matter of Canadian theological education was brought before the Synod when the president, Dr. Bersell, declared: "A very important matter comes before this convention through a petition from the Canada Conference. Synod must give serious attention to the development of an indigenous church in Canada. After all, it is a foreign country. That was never more obvious than it is today, when Canada is at war and we are not. The Canada Conference must develop its own ministry. This can be done in cooperation with other Lutheran bodies." Dr. Bersell went on to recommend Synod support for such a cooperative venture. Synod approved the plan and directed the president of Synod, the president of the Canada Conference, the dean of Augustana Seminary, Dr. E. E. Ryden as president of the American Lutheran Conference and Pastor A. A. Nelson to constitute a committee to lay plans. Dr. P. O. Bersell visited Saskatoon in 1941 to discuss plans concerning the Seminary. An agreement was made with the Lutheran College and Seminary, operated by the Synod of Western Canada of the United Lutheran Church in America, for a cooperative arrangement. Students would be required to take an academic course equivalent to that of the Rock Island Seminary and their ordination and ministerial standing would be equivalent to that of other pastors in the Church. The Canada Conference was to begin financial support by apportioning \$200 annually to the Seminary. Because of the war emergency it was not deemed wise to engage a full-time professor to represent Augustana on the faculty.

On December 15, 1944, a free conference on "Seminary Work in Western Canada" was held in Saskatoon with six Lutheran bodies represented. The opinion of the Conference was "It is in the interest of the Lutheran Church as a whole that all the General Bodies represented in Western Canada co-operate in the promotion of theological education."

In the autumn of 1945, a seminary professor's residence was purchased out of the Centennial Funds at a cost of \$5,900. The Church extended a call to the Rev. Gilbert T. Monson to become pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church in Saskatoon, and Augustana professor at the Lutheran College and Seminary. Interest in the Seminary was high; the first Seminary Sunday was authorized for November 10, 1946 and the results of offerings received that day most gratifying. Succeeding annual appeals were all well received, indicating the Conference's interest in the Seminary work. It is a well known fact that Augustana people in Canada support seminary work proportionately higher than the rest of the Synod. In 1948, Professor Monson explained the relationship of the Seminary to the Conference. "This project, though operating within our Conference, is under the direct supervision of the Synod through its Canadian Seminary Committee. A member of our Conference ministerium has served regularly on the faculty of Lutheran College and Seminary since 1945. Beginning in 1949, or perhaps even in September of this year, it is intended that he devote part time to traveling through the Conference in direct effort of recruitment of young men for the Holy Ministry . . . "

The Rev. Bernhard Bengtson was the first Augustana student to attend the seminary under the co-operative agreement. Upon graduation, he accepted a call to serve the church in Africa.

In 1952, the whole Church rejoiced as the first two young Canadians to be fully trained in Canada were ordained on calls to the Canadian field. Pastors Paul and Harold Eriksson, sons of veteran pastor A. E. Eriksson, were ordained in Saskatoon at a festive service in Augustana Church. The Synod had granted a petition from the Canada Conference that all Canadian graduates be permitted ordination in the Dominion.

Unfortunately, Pastor Monson was not on the faculty on this historic occasion. He had accepted a call to the U.S. and the year before had been replaced by the Rev. Otto A. Olson, Jr. However, it could readily be seen that his pioneering efforts on behalf of Augustana in the field of theological education in Canada were bearing fruit.

A significant event of 1952 was the decision of the Synod in response to a petition of the Canada Conference to give consideration to the Canadian Seminary in the \$350,000 appeal for a library and archives building for Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois. Synod ruled that the funds realized in Canada would be kept in Canada to be used in a building program at the Canadian Seminary. The Canada Conference set a goal of \$7,000. The result of this campaign was the building of a beautiful, modern professor's residence and Augustana centre on the campus of the Lutheran College and Seminary.

In 1954, an agreement was drawn up between the Synod of Western Canada of the United Lutheran Church in America and the Augustana Lutheran Church with regard to the Seminary arrangement. The period of trial was over. Mr. Stanley W. McKay was elected to the Board of Directors of the Seminary as an Augustana representative. An Augustana office was designated in the new Lutheran College and Seminary building which had been erected and was dedicated on July 4, 1954.

In 1958, a new arrangement was entered into when Luther Seminary, Saskatoon, operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church, was united with the Lutheran College and Seminary in a joint operation. Since that time, discussions have been held to attempt a final settlement of theological education arrangements in western Canada. The two mergers forming The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, necessitated a reappraisal and rearrangement of existing operations. The expectation is that the two new churches will continue co-operation in one theological training centre for Canada's western provinces.

Since the inception of co-operative arrangements, ten young men have been ordained into the Holy Ministry to serve the Augustana Churches in Canada. The work here has proven to be a worthy investment and prospects for the future continue to be bright.

### THE ORIENTAL MISSION

An unusual mission was established during the 'forties in Vancouver, B.C. Veteran missionary Dr. John L. Benson had paid extensive visits to the Chinese sections of San Francisco and Vancouver when on a deputation tour of the Columbia and California Conferences in the spring of 1942. He recommended to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church that in case he should not be able to return to China because of war conditions, he be permitted to begin work among the Chinese on the West Coast. After the survey trip by Pastor Benson, the Board agreed that the Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Lindbeck and Dr. John L. Benson should take up residence in Vancouver, B.C. and begin mission work there.

Dr. Benson wrote, "In September, 1942, the three of us moved to Vancouver and established residence in the vacant Augustana parsonage located right in Chinatown. We at once discovered that it would be absolutely necessary to learn the Cantonese dialect if we should hope to accomplish anything. I got acquainted with a Chinese gentleman who spoke both Mandarin and Cantonese. He agreed to give me lessons in Cantonese three evenings a week for a consideration. After my return home to the parsonage those evenings I would go over the lesson with Pastor and Mrs. J. W. Lindbeck. This was good for me at least and the Lindbecks were also making progress in the language."

However, before the work could commence, Dr. Benson was sent a wire from the United China Relief requesting him to assist in the famine relief program in Honan Province of Central China. Dr. Benson left in the winter of 1942. The Lindbecks had made some contacts among the Chinese and had started a small Sunday school. Mrs. Roy Philpot (nee Inez Hedman) was survey worker for a period of time. Miss Martha Folcker and Miss Julia Finden also assisted as mission parish visitors. The Lindbecks left Vancouver to return to China and were succeeded in 1947 by Pastor and Mrs. John Benson, Jr. "It soon became clear to us that we could not hope for permanent results by centering entirely on the children. Work among the parents and adults required knowledge of Cantonese and Mrs. Benson and I had only a very limited knowledge of Mandarin. We made prayerful attempts to secure a Chinese worker but without success. Doors seemed closed to us wherever we turned. We began to see that Augustana's attempts to win the Chinese in Vancouver were now both too late and too little." Other denominations with Chinese missions of long standing were well established. "There seemed little need for another mission here at this late date when the Chinese population was more or less static or slowly decreasing . . . After prayerful consideration we recommended that the mission be closed and the property sold." Thus ended the unique Oriental Mission effort in Vancouver, B.C.

As a postscript we might add that the John Bensons remained in Vancouver to pioneer for the eventual establishment of Faith Lutheran Church of North Burnaby. Pastor Benson recalls, "An interesting and exciting work which suddenly fell to our lot while at the Oriental Mission and later in the work at North Burnaby, was our work among many Lutheran Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Hungarian et al displaced persons—DPs as they were then called who then flocked to Canada from concentration camps in Germany. The last months of its existence our mission home at Princess Street became a hostess house for these people on Sunday afternoons and evenings and also during the week. We contacted hundreds of these folks in various ways and became a means of assurance to them that the Lutheran Church in Canada welcomed them and was ready to serve them both physically and spiritually. The little unassuming house on Princess Street became a haven of rest, comfort and fellowship for these strangers without our gates. When the mission closed and was sold we continued to meet each week in the Y.M.C.A. Many precious memories stem from contacts thus made. After we left Canada a U.L.C.A. congregation continued the contacts we started and national pastors were brought here to serve their respective groups."

## *Chapter X*

### YOUNG MEN'S VISIONS, OLD MEN'S DREAMS

It was Sir Wilfrid Laurier who said that the Twentieth Century belonged to Canada. Perhaps it can be said that the 'fifties belonged to the Canada Conference of the Augustana Lutheran Church. Certainly, this had been a period during which the church has taken great strides forward. The Executive Director of the Canadian Lutheran Council, Dr. Earl J. Treusch, writes: Throughout my years of contact with the Canada Conference of the Augustana Lutheran Church I have always been impressed with their spirit of youthfulness. This may be due, in large measure at least, to the fact that the average age of their pastors is perhaps the lowest of any Lutheran Church Body in Canada.

"This may explain, in part at least, the vigour and enthusiasm of the Augustana Church in Canada. In scripture we read, 'Your young men shall see visions,' and we see evidence of those visions almost everywhere; new church buildings in almost all major cities of western Canada, enthusiastic support of the seminary training program in Saskatoon, ready participation in the whole work of the whole Church.

"This youthfulness of spirit, however, is by no means confined to the pastors alone. It appears to be evident in the rank and file of its people, so that we are assured that their visions will become realities which will provide pleasant dreams for old age."

The hearts of the old pioneers, pastors and people alike, would have thrilled to the events of this last decade. Many of their dreams, of their hopes for the future of the Canada Conference began to materialize during this period. Visions were indeed becoming realities.

The most exciting reality was the product of seminary co-operation, Canadian pastors for Canadian parishes. On May 25, 1952, the first fruits of the theological education program in Saskatoon were seen when two young men, Harold and Paul Eriksson, were ordained into the Holy Ministry. These were the first Canadian-born, Canadian-trained and Canadian-ordained men in the Augustana Lutheran Church. The following year two more Canadians were ordained at Kenora, Ontario, as Alfred Sander and Vernon Sundmark were graduated from the Seminary. Donald Sjoberg was ordained at Erickson, Manitoba, in 1954; Vincent Eriksson at Czar, Alberta, in 1957; Ferdy Baglo at New Westminster, B.C., in 1958; and Morris Green at Kenora, Ontario, in 1959. Eight native Canadians were thus added to the Conference ministerium.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the first Augustana graduate from the Lutheran College and Seminary was H. Bernhard Bengtson. Born in the United States, though he grew up in the Scandia, Alberta, community, he also secured a part of his theological education in the United States, and was ordained in 1946 at Duluth, Minnesota, on a call to service in Africa. When for reasons of health he was unable to return to Africa as a missionary after two terms there, he accepted a call to a parish in the U.S.A.

In 1960 Paul Swedberg became the tenth Augustana graduate produced by Lutheran co-operation in theological education in Saskatoon. It is anticipated that Dr. Malvin H. Lundein, the president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, will ordain Hermann Ludwig—the eleventh Augustana graduate—in Saskatoon on May 27, 1962.

The fruit of seminary co-operation was sweet to the taste of a Conference hungry for pastors. The graduation and ordination of these men marked the turning point in the history of the Canada Conference. It cannot be denied that these ordinations, particularly those of 1952 and 1953, solved the problems of a number of critical rural vacancies so that the Conference, in good conscience, could turn its attention to new areas. In 1952 the Canada Conference ministerium numbered only eight men in the parish ministry in the entire Dominion. Since that time the roll of ministers has steadily increased, due partly to the ordination of Canadian men and partly to a new interest in the Canadian field on the part of American students at Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois.

Two men who faithfully served the Augustana cause in Canada for many years retired during the 'fifties. The Rev. Otto Eklund, whose name is a household word in the Alberta area where he ministered for most of his thirty-five years as parish pastor, retired in 1951. His retirement has not prevented him from continuing an active life. He has served as teacher at the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute in Camrose, though on a part-time basis, most years since he retired in that city. Mr. Richard Odelberg is another man whose name is associated with many years of Augustana history in Canada. This faithful lay preacher served parishes at Erickson in Manitoba, and at Regina, Kelliher, and Beatty-Kinistino in Saskatchewan. He is now living in retirement in the last mentioned parish. Many are the interesting stories that these men can tell about their ministries in Canada.

Two pastors in Canada laid down their work during this decade. Pastor J. Arvid Vikman, a former Conference president, died in Vancouver while he was serving Faith Lutheran Church in North Burnaby, in 1953. Pastor Herman Larson had spent only a few months in his parish at Scandia, Alberta, in 1957, when he was stricken with a heart attack and passed away.

The Conference "lengthened its cords and strengthened its stakes" with an increased mission emphasis and vigorous building program. Augustana congregations in four of the five major cities of the prairies all built fine new worship centres and in the fifth construction was begun. Many other congregations were busy with ambitious building or renovating programs. Church buildings which had been long neglected were given much needed repair and refurnishing. All this activity was reflected in financial reports as expenditures showed a sharp rise with each passing year. Augustana people were building for the future, and building handsome tributes to the glory of God.

A new era for home missions in Canada opened in the mid-'fifties. Previously, the Conference had been reluctant to investigate new fields because of the desperate shortage of pastors. Dr. Nelson expressed disappointment that the Conference at two or three successive annual conventions opposed the extension program of the Board of American Missions. "We were keenly interested in entering what seemed to us to be 'open doors' for new missions in some of our cities. We also knew that young men at the Theological Seminary at Rock Island were interested in that type of a program in Canada, but the Conference expressed a greater concern about some of our rural fields where we had repeatedly failed to reactivate the congregations both before and since."

The Conference was faced with a difficult choice. To remain loyal to the older established congregations seemed, at the time, to be the right thing to do. A change in this position was brought about by the supply of pastors coming from the Canadian seminary. These men manned the rural congregations which had been critical problems for the Conference Executive Board. As these long-vacant parishes received pastors, the Conference became more willing to consider supporting the home mission plans of the Board of American Missions.

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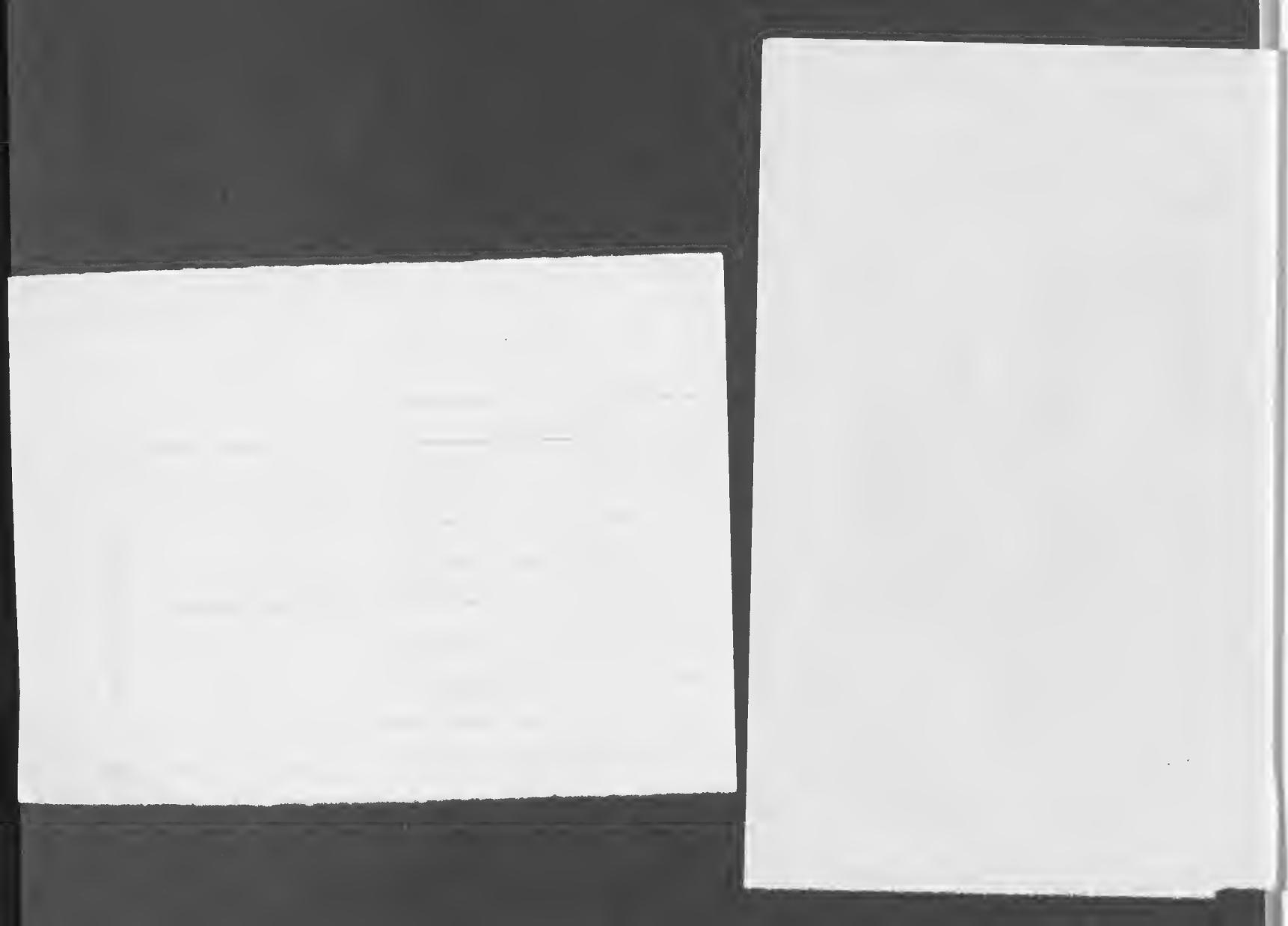
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The first of a number of healthy and growing congregations to be organized in the Canada Conference during this period was Messiah Lutheran Church of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. Here, student intern Fred Erson, under the direction of Pastor Richard Swedberg of Regina, prepared a congregation of 59 members for organization on Pentecost Sunday, June 1, 1952. The following year the old church building standing empty at Archive was brought the sixty miles into town and placed on a foundation. Renovated, the building was dedicated during a raging blizzard on May 10. There are members of the church who drive as far as 54 miles to attend services. Pastor Delmar Christensen became the first resident minister in August, 1955, serving Messiah and the older country church, Emanuel. The former congregation outgrew the old church building and in 1960 dedicated one of the finest churches to be found serving an urban-rural setting.

Pastor C. Robert Pearson noted the movement of rural people to the town of Camrose and there arranged the organization of Bethel Lutheran Church also in 1952. A church building was purchased from the Missouri Synod and moved to a handsome site in this Alberta city. The congregation has made slow but steady progress.

The tiny Manitoba-Ontario District gained a new congregation in 1954 when Bethany Lutheran Church of Norman, Ontario, was organized under the leadership of student intern Julius Peterson and Pastor Hugo Anderson, then serving Bethesda, Kenora.

Now, each year, one or more congregations applied to join the Canada Conference. In 1955, Grace Canadian Lutheran Church of Broadview, Saskatchewan was organized with 53 charter members. This congregation had been worshipping together for many years at a separate preaching place, part of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Percival. In 1958, Immanuel and Grace Canadian merged and now the congregation has its worship centre in Broadview, a church building brought in from Kipling, 20 miles south, and renovated for the new Grace Canadian Lutheran Church.

Calgary gained the distinction of being the first Canadian city with two Augustana congregations. Messiah Lutheran Church was organized in the Altadore district of Calgary after preparatory work by Sister Helen Eriksson and Board missionary, the Rev. Dean Berg.

Dr. Anton A. Nelson's last official act as Regional Director in Canada after twenty-five years of service in the Dominion, was to participate in the organization of Trinity Lutheran Church of Stavely, Alberta. Organized in 1956 the congregation was admitted to the Conference in 1957, and has since erected a chapel during the internship of Morris Green, and now has a parsonage and a resident minister, Pastor James Chell.

A second Augustana congregation for the city of Edmonton was organized in 1957. Christ Lutheran Church of the Parkview District was prepared for organization by student intern Stuart Lundahl and the Rev. Daniel A. Dickhart. The congregation was admitted to the Conference in 1958.

Pastor Alfred Sander moved into the mining town of Atikokan, Ontario, during the summer of 1958 and began to lay the groundwork for a new mission. Calvary Lutheran Church was organized in the autumn of the year and worship was held in a high school room rented for the purpose. The congregation in this post-war mining community grew to the extent that they soon needed a proper church building. A beautiful site among the northwestern Ontario evergreens was chosen and a fine first unit built and dedicated in 1960.

In the fall of 1959, the Lutheran Church of the Cross at Lac du Bonnet was organized to succeed the older country congregation, Ebenezer. Pastor Morris Green had come that summer to be the first resident minister the area

had ever had in the forty-five years Augustana was on the scene. There were times when the congregation in the country had almost succumbed, but summer services by students and interns and occasional services by pastors from Winnipeg and Kenora helped to revive the flagging spirits of the people. The move to the town has given new impetus to the work in the area. A chapel and parsonage are now located in town to serve Christ's cause in the community.

The year 1959 also saw work begin in the town of Wainwright, Alberta. Pastor Edwin Bowen, serving the Czar-Hughenden parish, moved to nearby Wainwright for a period of months to lay the groundwork for the new mission. Results from Pastor Bowen's efforts in the community were gratifying. In November, Peace Lutheran Church of Wainwright, Alberta, came into being. The year 1960 saw the young congregation in a building program to provide Lutherans of this Alberta centre with a vital witnessing opportunity.

Though no new missions were begun in 1960, the initial arrangements were being made for work in Capilano Highlands, North Vancouver, British Columbia and in 1961, Pastor Dean Berg of Calgary was called to the Gloria Dei Mission to start services in this north shore community. On October 1, 1961 the congregation was officially organized.

Thus far we have been mentioning the new congregations which were established during the 'fifties. Mention must be made concerning some other events which brought about new congregations on the Conference rolls. Mergers, realignments and other means of creating a more effective Lutheran witness at the congregational level were being employed.

Two former Canada Conference congregations returned to the fold in 1954. Port Arthur's Immanuel Church and Fort William's Zion, which had affiliated themselves with the Minnesota Conference in 1926, petitioned to rejoin the Canada Conference. Four years later, in 1958, the remainder of the Minnesota Conference congregations in Ontario, namely, Zion, Fort Frances; Trinity, Bergland; Zion, Deerlock; and Our Saviour's, Stratton, applied for entrance into the Canada Conference. On January 1, 1959, four congregations which had always been a part of the Columbia Conference were received into Canada Conference membership. Augustana, Vancouver; Immanuel, New Westminster; St. Paul's, Haney; and Faith, North Burnaby, were welcomed and together formed the new British Columbia District.

Realignment of parishes and mergers resulted in some additions and subtractions from the roster of congregations. In 1958, Christ Lutheran Church of the Synod of Western Canada, U.L.C.A., and our Salem Lutheran Church, both of Young, Saskatchewan, climaxed several years of joint work and worship by merging and taking the name of the former U.L.C.A. congregation. The emerging congregation petitioned to join the Canada Conference. In 1959, St. Paul's, an A.L.C. congregation at Pitt Meadows, B.C., was merged with our St. Paul's congregation of Haney. The same year, the former E.L.C. congregation, Zion Lutheran, at Buchanan and Augustana's Elim Church merged and took the name Faith Lutheran Church. The resultant congregation also joined the Canada Conference. A realignment of the Augustana parish in southeastern Saskatchewan resulted in First Lutheran Church of Dubuc leaving the Conference to join the new Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, and a former U.L.C.A. congregation, St. John's of Clayridge, replacing it on the Conference roster. First was released and St. John's accepted at the 1961 Canada Conference convention in Edmonton. At the same convention, an A.L.C. congregation, Good Hope of Gull Lake, for some years served by Augustana pastors from Shaunavon, petitioned and was received into Conference membership.

In addition to these above mentioned congregations, there remain a number of situations where Augustana pastors are serving congregations belonging to other synods and vice-versa.

It might appear that the number of Canada Conference congregations began to sky-rocket in the 'fifties. This was not so. Like the 'twenties, this was a period of "cleaning house"; twelve congregations were dissolved or merged with others. Statistical reports, once again, began to reflect the true state of affairs in the Conference. In 1950, the Conference reported 46 congregations with a confirmed membership of 2,743. At the end of 1960 the Conference had 48 congregations with a confirmed membership of 5,688. Average membership of congregations has thus risen from 60.8 to 118.5 in the ten year period. Canada, during the past few years has been one of the fastest growing areas of the Augustana Lutheran Church, running neck and neck with California.

One of the problems related to dissolving congregations which faced the Conference was what to do with cemetery properties. In Calmar, Alberta, the old church building was sold for \$150 in 1952 with the understanding that the money would be used to fence the cemetery grounds. The same situation developed with the sale of the Fleming Farm in 1953. One of the provisions of the sale was that the cemetery in one corner of the forty acre farm be fenced. How many old cemeteries, the last resting-places of many a pioneer, are now abandoned and forgotten, we shall perhaps never know.

In 1954 the North and South Saskatchewan Districts merged to form one Saskatchewan District in order to care more effectively for the co-operative interests of the congregations in the province. With the new British Columbia District there are now four districts in the Canada Conference.

The drive for more effective church work in Canada has brought dividends. The Canada Conference has never before enjoyed such a stable ministry, vigorous laity, and rapid growth in membership and stewardship. During these years mission investigations were going on constantly. Field Missionary Miss Dorothy Lidberg came in 1951 and served in Kenora, Laclu, Calgary, Camrose and Regina, assisting in survey work and parish activity. The Conference worked incessantly to secure the services of Sister Helen Eriksson, Augustana's first and only Canadian deaconess. The efforts were rewarded. Sister Helen, a daughter of A. E. Eriksson, came to play a significant role in survey and development of new missions. A number of areas, such as Nipawin, Plato, Saskatchewan, and Ferintosh, Alberta, were surveyed and since mission prospects were not good, abandoned. Areas which, at the time of writing, have been "pre-empted" by Augustana in Canada are: Ladner, east Haney, Port Moody, and Kimberly-Cranbrook in British Columbia; southwest Calgary, High River, and two areas in Edmonton, Alberta; Moose Jaw and two areas in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; and Winnipeg, Manitoba. These are areas which indicate a need for the Lutheran witness and where Augustana is exploring the possibility of serving through the establishment of new missions.

Dr. Theodore Matson, Executive Director of the Board of American Missions says, "Personally, I am of the opinion that Canada has a very promising future and our Board . . . must be alert to the opportunities and responsibilities, pending such a time as we have an indigenous church in Canada. In the meantime, we dare not be opportunistic or neglectful."

Since its organization in 1939, the Board of American Missions had given \$506,512.16 aid to Canada Conference congregations as of the end of 1961, in addition to such other investments as the salaries of regional directors and field missionaries. As congregations in the Conference have been taking the significant step of becoming self-sustaining, thus freeing monies for new mission development, progress has been made. In 1947 thirty-three congregations—none of them new missions—petitioned for aid. In 1962 nineteen congregations are receiving aid, and all but eight of these were organized since 1947.

The Board of American Missions took a step in 1960 which added still further to the indigenousness of the Canada Conference. The Rev. Donald

Sjoberg was called to be the first Canadian Regional Director of the Canada Conference, succeeding the Rev. L. Floyd Lewis who had faithfully served the area for three years.

As Conference affairs increased, the office of the presidency became more demanding upon the incumbent. At the 1950 convention, the Rev. Gilbert T. Monson said, "I have served in this office since 1947. To continue in it seems unwise, especially from certain points of view. For instance, we should not get into the frame of mind that the one who serves as Professor of Theology at Saskatoon should also be president of the Conference. Furthermore, if another were president, the work as a whole should get more and better attention. It should no longer be necessary for any one of us to serve in dual or triple capacities. This is but to say, in all sincerity, that I am not to be considered as a candidate for re-election."

Despite his plea, Pastor Monson was re-elected. His words were prophetic, however, for when his successor, the Rev. G. Uno Lundmark, elected in 1951, was forced to resign his office due to the pressures of the parish ministry in Winnipeg. Professor Otto A. Olson, Jr., was voted to the Conference's leadership. This was in 1954, at which time a Committee on Full Time Conference Presidency was elected. The Committee reported the following year that the expense forbade the introduction of a full time Conference officer. Secretarial help was recommended as a stopgap.

In his 1958 message to the Conference, the president, Otto A. Olson, Jr., suggested that a full time office secretary may be needed to replace the part-time assistance available to that time. He said, "Even so, the present arrangement is subject to considerable just criticism, because there are too many areas of conflict of duties between seminary work and Conference administration, in which duties cannot be turned over to a secretary." The convention took action to study the problem further. With the Canada Conference boundaries widening and the number of congregations and pastors increasing, the responsibility of the Conference leader was growing.

A surprising development took place at the 1959 convention at New Stockholm, Saskatchewan. The committee had dolefully reported the conclusion that financially it seemed that to have a full time president was impossible, especially in a year when Our Christian College Advance was being planned. A great discussion ensued during which arguments pro and con were shared. The climax came with a motion to call Pastor Otto A. Olson, Jr. as full time Conference president as soon as arrangements could be made. The vote was held. The results are engraved in a Communion Set at Atikokan, Ont. It happened that the persons counting the votes in the backroom at New Stockholm wrote with a ball point pen on the plastic covering of the Communion Set which was a gift from the oldest congregation (New Stockholm) to the youngest (Atikokan). Somehow the writing etched itself right into the metal and refuses to come off. There it stands: "Yes—47; No—10". Pastor Sander of Calvary, Atikokan, comments, I would say that we have a rather peculiar record of that historic vote."

Pastor Olson, now Dr. Olson — having received an honorary degree from his alma mater, Augustana Theological Seminary — in recognition of his work in Canada both for the Conference and in inter-Lutheran affairs, was the unanimous choice for leadership. At a previous convention he had received the outstanding vote of confidence of delegates when it was discovered that every one of the nominating ballots was for him. Pastor Olson became full time president in August 1960, Pastor Harold Floreen succeeding him as professor at the co-operative Lutheran Seminary in Saskatoon.

The year 1959 saw the emergence of Augustana Lutheran Church Women as a new international organization. Almost all of the women's organizations of the Canada Conference elected to join the new effort to unite and strengthen

the witness of Augustana women in Canada. Mrs. K. G. Morgenroth, capable president of the Conference Women's Missionary Society for some years, was elected first president of the new fellowship.

The Luther League took great strides forward in the 'fifties, with the introduction of the Leadership School program fostered by Dr. Wilton Bergstrand of the Augustana youth office. Young people gathered each year for concentrated study of Scripture and methods of enriching League work. The Schools have been held in Camrose at C.L.B.I., in Saskatoon at the Seminary and in Regina at Luther College.

It is quite evident from the foregoing recital of facts and events that the Canada Conference was enjoying the greatest decade of advance in its history. On the threshold of a new decade, there appeared to be even greater opportunities and blessings in store. God's Kingdom was indeed being extended "from sea to sea" in the Dominion of Canada, and Augustana was playing a significant role.

The merger of the Canada Conference of the Augustana Lutheran Church with other Lutherans in 1962, will give birth to two of the three Canadian Synods of the Lutheran Church in America: the Western Canada Synod and the Central Canada Synod. Together with the Eastern Canada Synod they will constitute the Lutheran Church in America—Canada Section. Augustana's contribution to the merger will undoubtedly be an association of vital and vigorous congregations. Dr. Olson addressed the following words to the 1961 convention of the Canada Conference: "It is a thrilling thing to be part of the merger experience. It is important that we realize that this is not so much an end as it is a beginning. Even more truly, it is a continuation."

Yes, the beginning of a new opportunity to serve God in the strengthened fellowship of a united and witnessing church is at hand, and a continuation also of the increasing development and growth of the church in the fields of evangelism, stewardship and mission to Canada's millions. Augustana's contribution to Canada and the Lutheran Church in the Dominion will prove to have been historically and spiritually significant.

## *Chapter XI*

# POTPOURRI — CONGREGATIONAL HISTORIES

What do you do with anecdotes and information left over from a history such as this one? File it away for another day, or include it in a hodge-podge chapter of miscellaneous material? We've chosen the latter course and hope that it will not prove too confusing. If there is little or no information about some congregations it may be for one of several reasons: (1) Information was not available. (2) Congregations failed to provide material which was available. (3) The story of the congregation is included in earlier chapters of the book. We hope these "left-overs" will prove as appetizing as the previous "main course".

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

*Augustana Lutheran Church of Vancouver* remained for many years at the familiar site at Princess and Pender until the old building was sold to the Ukrainian Catholics. The Augustana congregation then borrowed the facilities of Redeemer Lutheran Church (U.L.C.A.) for a period of time. Pastor Oscar Olson came to Vancouver in 1945 and in spite of war and immediate post-war building restrictions and shortages of material, led a relentless drive to erect a new church building on the corner of King Edward and Ontario Streets. The new church building of English Tudor architecture was only on blue prints and the basement but a hole in the ground when Pastor Olson showed his immense faith by inviting the Columbia Conference to hold its 1947 convention in the new church. It was completed and ready for occupancy on Easter Sunday, 1947. The Conference Convention was held in spite of the fact that electricians, plumbers and a host of women with brooms and mops met the delegation at the door, Dr. C. A. V. Lund officiated at the dedication held on October 26, 1947. When Pastor Oscar Olson left the congregation he was succeeded by his son, the Rev. O. Arnold Olson.

*Immanuel Lutheran Church of New Westminister* had been in existence for thirty-six years when, except for one resident ministry of about a year's duration, the first resident pastor arrived to serve the congregation. He was the Rev. Otto A. Olson, Jr., now president of the Canada Conference. The congregation has distinguished itself in sending forth three young men from its membership to the Seminary in Saskatoon: Glen Carlson, Garnet Leach and the writer. The congregation's original church building was altered and a major addition erected in 1950, giving the congregation a beautiful and cheerful sanctuary to meet in each Sunday.

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Haney* has seen its ups and downs. The Rev. Oscar Olson from Vancouver was the first to hold services in the community, the people meeting in private homes. It was not until February 15, 1948, however, that the people were able to organize a congregation. Then, Pastor Otto A. Olson, Jr., was serving them from New Westminster. Services were held in the Masonic Hall for some years until the old Maple Ridge Baptist Church was purchased and renovated. The Rev. Clifford Berggren became the first resident minister and served the congregation for two and a half years. The Rev. Duane H. Emb erg arrived in the summer of 1959 when the "building boom" was on in Haney. The congregation was given new hope and confidence

and during the ministry of Pastor Emberg has erected an \$18,000 parsonage and a \$37,000 first unit church building. The new house of worship was dedicated February 5, 1961.

*Faith Lutheran Church of North Burnaby* has its roots back in 1943 when Pastor Nels Norbeck established a branch Sunday school in the Vancouver Heights region. This program continued until 1945 when Miss Julia Finden was assigned as Field Missionary by the Board of American Missions. In 1947, Pastor John Benson, Jr. then serving the Oriental Mission, was asked to take over the work. He recollects, "I was glad to do this, as was also Mrs. Benson. Miss Julia Finden was the tireless parish visitor in this area. On Sunday we rented an unattractive hall on lower East Hastings Street. Dances, card parties and public auctions were held here during the week. We cleaned house, improvised an' altar and converted the place temporarily into a place of worship and for Sunday school. But, only a few stragglers would come for worship to such a location. Surveys indicated a large percentage of unchurched people, a large proportion of whom were Lutheran of various national backgrounds. Much prayer went into our work here. Finally, we moved further up on East Hastings Street (in 1948) and rented a funeral parlour . . . Better results followed. The funeral directors built new and larger quarters and our home mission board (in 1949) bought the old property for a rather modest consideration. We trudged many weary blocks around the neighbourhood far and wide—Miss Finden, Mrs. Benson and I—looking for prospects and visiting old contacts. Upwards of fifty children were gathered into the Sunday school. We had a lively and active Junior Mission Society. Attendance at worship varied from a handful of less than ten, to twenty-five or more. We organized a little ladies guild. We even had a small choir. Discouragements were many. But we had encouragements also. The Philip Sauder family was one of these. A great adversary was the impermanence of residence of the people we had contacted."

The Bensons left and Pastor Arthur Nordstrand became minister to the area. The chapel was dedicated in February, 1951, and on Sunday, May 20, 1951 *Faith Lutheran Church* was organized. Pastor J. Arvid Vikman, former Canada Conference president, served the congregation during the 'fifties. It proved to be his final area of service, for Pastor Vikman died while pastor of *Faith Church* in 1953. Pastor Paul Olson was serving the congregation during ambitious plans for building a new church. In December, 1956, a fine new edifice was dedicated and now serves a thriving congregation ministering the gospel to North Burnaby.

#### ALBERTA

*First Lutheran Church of Calgary*, for many years located in a former Baptist church building, determined to erect a new church building in 1949. This was during the ministry of Pastor Luverne Tengbom, now one of the Canada Conference's three men serving under call from Augustana's Board of World Missions in Tanganyika. It was not until January, 1951 that work commenced. It was a day of mingled feelings when the last services were held in the old church on the corner of 6th Avenue and 2nd Street S.W. The date was April 1, 1951. Happy thoughts but also nostalgic ones ran through the minds of the assembled congregation, many having worshipped "in the little white church on the corner" for close to fifty years. Dr. Anton A. Nelson officiated at the laying of the cornerstone for the new church building the same day. For the next four months services were held in the auditorium of Mount Royal College until work had progressed sufficiently to use the basement of the new church. On June 29, 1952, the new *First Lutheran Church* was dedicated. Rev. G. Uno Lundmark, president of the Canada Conference, presided at the Rite of Dedication, assisted by Dr. Anton Nelson.

One of *First Lutheran's* members, Miss Greta Ekstrand, served the foreign

mission field as a missionary nurse. The congregation was very busy in 1955 when the Canada Conference played host to the Augustana International Youth Conference. Two thousand young people from all over North America gathered in the city. A great deal of work and responsibility fell to the local chairman, Marguerite Flood, and her committees.

*Saron Ev. Lutheran Church of Clive*, was organized in the home of Mr. Martin Monson and family on August 8, 1901. The meeting was called and presided over by the Rev. A. J. Ryden. When this settlement first started in 1899 there weren't any pastors near by, for this was frontier territory. Ministers came from Lake Lillian, Minnesota, (Christena Church), for visits and services. It was during one of these visits by Pastor Ryden that the congregation was organized. At the annual meeting of the congregation in 1904 it was decided to erect a church building. The congregation formed log cutting bees and logs were cut from close by timber and sawed on home made saw mills. Most of the main church frame was cut from two huge spruce trees. The butt log of the one tree, had to be loaded with teams of horses on a sled and hauled singly to the saw mills. Many more logs were cut to complete the building. All the altar work and carvings, including the pulpit, were hand carved, taking many hours of careful work by daylight and lamplight. An amusing anecdote remembered by members of the congregation concerns the time the church was painted. All but one of the painters had gone home one evening. One man decided to remain and finish the piece he had started. It was near dark when he finished. It was raining lightly when he left the church to walk home. He had only gone a few steps when he saw a half-grown black and white kitten wading in the mud in front of him, and as he had only a short distance to the Oscar Westling home where he stayed, he grabbed the animal and put it under his coat to take it home and give it protection from the rain. Quite a few people at that time had never seen a skunk. There was one man the wiser that night.

*Fridhem Ev. Lutheran Church of Camrose*, was organized in 1902 with thirteen charter members. The congregational secretary, Mrs. Robert Rasmussen, shared these stories of the past. Writing about the Ladies' Aid of days gone by, she says, "The duties of secretary and treasurer were combined with that of president, and almost always she carried and took care of the suit case containing the sewing. For several years, the society was divided into two groups, conditions for travel not what they are today, that was more practical. But after a time when roads became better, and some acquired better driving horses and became the proud possessors of rubber-tired top buggies, the two groups were united. Meetings were held once a month, at the different homes. The visitors arrived on foot, by wagon and in those beautiful new buggies . . . but no cars. It is a matter of note that two elderly ladies seriously considered getting bicycles in order to get to sewing circle more quickly. There is an account of the annual picnic which was held every year at the C. J. Anderson home. By all accounts they must have had a hilarious time. The music was supplied by the Maple Leaf Band, and a ball game was held between the Miquelon Lake Roosters and the Pretty Hill Bantams. There were also games of different kinds, boating, singing and to top off the day a bronco riding contest. Shades of 'yesteryear'! In abandoning our picnics we seem to have retired a lot of fun, but times do change and we seem to change with them."

Fridhem of Camrose gave the nucleus of members which organized Wilhelmina congregation of Hay Lakes in 1908, and in 1910 a further nucleus traveled with Pastor Olaf Lindgren to form a congregation at Czar. In 1952, Bethel of Camrose, was organized in the city becoming yet another "child" of Fridhem.

*Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Meeting Creek* was organized on January 10, 1906. Long-time pastor of the congregation, the Rev. Otto Eklund, recalls

an incident which happened when it was suggested that English be introduced in the congregation. "One old gentleman stood up after the service and said, 'I shall tell you good friends what I think of English . . . it is simply dung ("skit" in Swedish). Dung is good for the garden, but no earthly good for the church.'" Pastor Eklund comments further, "The Meeting Creek settlement consisted mainly of Swedish people from northern Sweden. They knew nothing about church work, nor did they consider it necessary to attend church. They could read, Bible or Psalmbok, or could have 'lasare-mote'—reading services—like they had at home. One man was appointed in a village to read Luther, John Arnt or some other 'Postilla'. Some went to church maybe once in five years, or when a child had been born and the mother had to be 'kyrkotagen'—churched—a rite of blessing for a mother after childbirth. They were poor and had no conception of sacrifice for the church. In Sweden the property owners paid taxes to church, but in this country there was no taxes. Thank goodness! Then, we understand that there could be no personal work or witness—no possibility to teach Sunday school or to lead a ladies aid." One woman told Pastor Eklund, "If I have to get up in front of people and read the Bible and pray, I'll die!" Pastor Eklund responded in his inimitable way, "You are going to die anyway, so you might just as well die here; I'll pick you up and carry you out."

These lines indicate some of the situations encountered in various parts of the prairies in the early days.

*Wilhelmina Ev. Lutheran Church of Hay Lakes* was organized in 1908 on the night of Saturday, November 7th at the Erik Victor Erickson home. It was agreed to name the church the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Wilhelmina congregation for many of the early settlers who homesteaded in this community had immigrated from Wilhelmina, Vesterbotten, in the northern part of Sweden. The foundation of the church was laid in 1912, with each family being asked to haul three loads of stones for the concrete. After the forms were up an open air service was held within the foundation walls to commemorate the occasion. The building was completed in stages with construction finished in 1919. The church is built very near the highest point of land between Edmonton and Lake Superior. A 579 pound bell was purchased and installed in 1932. Inscribed on it are the words: "Hit, O Jesus samlas vi Att ditt helga ord fa hora. Vardes sjalf du sta oss bi Och var hag till andakt rora, Att han, ifran jorden tagen, Till dig alltid varder dragen."

*Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Czar*, was organized September 21, 1910, only a few months after the hardy founding pioneers arrived to homestead in the area. The initial meeting took place in the home of Pastor Olof Lindgren, himself among the homesteaders. The pastor's salary for 1911 was set at \$75.00. One year later, on May 1, 1911, work was begun on the church building. It was dedicated on July 27, 1913. The people obviously took long drawn-out business meetings for granted. Most of them during early years were all day affairs. On one occasion the Ladies' Aid held their annual meeting from 10 to 12 a.m. After dinner the congregational meeting commenced and continued with but a brief recess for supper until 11 p.m.

Pastor Lindgren served the congregation until his death in 1927. Part of the time he served as Conference president. When Pastor J. E. Carlson came in 1928, a parsonage had to be secured because Pastor Lindgren had owned his own home. A layman, "Liten" Lundgren, spent the summer of 1930 tending the flock and is remembered for having typed by hand a dozen copies of a sixty-three page 20th Anniversary Book. In 1949, the church building, located in open country, was brought into the town of Czar. Story has it that as the building was being brought into town, it tipped alarmingly while passing a particular corner. "Mr. Victor Lindgren, who supplied the encouragement to move the

building to town, couldn't bear to watch the progress any longer. He disappeared into the blacksmith shop until the corner had been negotiated, possibly spending the time in prayer." The old parsonage was sold during the hard times, so when Pastor and Mrs. Edwin Bowen came in 1955 it was necessary to purchase a house. The former United Church manse, right behind Emmanuel Church, was purchased, renovated and dedicated.

*Bethany Lutheran Church of Hughenden* was organized on May 23, 1910, in the Amisk Valley Schoolhouse. The previous spring, Mrs. Albin (Ida) Erickson felt that there were enough homesteaders around Amisk to warrant the organization of a congregation. Consequently, she walked from homestead to homestead to talk to the settlers about starting a Sunday school and church. She covered many miles each day, and apparently thought nothing of strolling seven miles one way to visit Mr. Axel Erickson, who was sick with rheumatic fever. When the Sunday School began, the two teachers were Mrs. Erickson and Mr. Olaf Carbol, a Pentecostal lay pastor. The school served both the Swedish and Norwegian settlers. Pastor Olof Lindgren officiated at the organization meeting and it was arranged for him to visit once monthly to hold services. Two acres of land were purchased from the Hudson Bay Company in 1912 as a site for the church. In the spring of 1913, construction on a church building was begun with Mr. Olof Walin in charge. Mr. Walin worked hard, often being on the job by four a.m. in the summers and continuing, even when there was no volunteer help to aid him, until seven p.m. or later. For his labors he received \$2.50 a day, and, says a charter member, "he had to wait for his money at that."

The first service was held in the new church in January of 1917. The building was not dedicated until 1923, when the Alberta District Convention was held in Czar. On the morning of Palm Sunday, 1934, tragedy struck the struggling congregation. As the people were coming to worship, they discovered that their beloved church was in flames. Having no water, nothing could be done to extinguish the flames. However, all the furnishings were saved. Many of the present pews were the ones carried out while the church burned. The cause of the blaze is uncertain. However, a permanent chimney had not yet been installed; a plain sheet-metal pipe carried away the smoke. The wood and coal stove had been lighted, and it is felt that the temporary pipes could have been the cause of the fire.

A Norwegian Lutheran congregation had built a church in Amisk, so the Mission Board advised against re-building in the town. Services were held in the Amisk Park Lutheran Church (E.L.C.) building until 1949 when they began to be held in the Anglican Church in Hughenden. Now the main topic of business became the building of the congregation's own worship centre. Morgan school was looked at and the committee in charge decided to purchase it. One day shortly after, the school building was brought in on a truck and along with it came excitement. Where was it to be put? The board members were contacted and by 8 a.m. a board meeting convened. Knowing that the schoolhouse could not be left in the middle of the street, it was finally decided to place it on a lot on the northeast end of town, where it is presently situated. The building remained the same until the summer of 1954 when five young people were to be confirmed. This gave added impetus to the building program. The church was lengthened adding sacristies and narthex and completely refinished. This was all done when the congregation was without a pastor. With the coming of Pastor Bowen to Czar which meant the services of a regular pastor, the congregation has grown and outgrown the present building. Plans to enlarge the present facilities resulted in construction of a substantial addition which was dedicated on May 7, 1961.

*Salem Lutheran Church of Scandia* was organized at a meeting conducted by Dr. L. G. Abrahamson on May 19, 1919. In the fall of 1920 a shed was built

to serve as school and church. The first Julotta was held in this building which eventually became the school barn. Mr. John Bengtson and Mr. Andrew Lindquist were among the laymen who cared for worship services when pastors were not available. The Jenny Lind School, completed in 1921, served as a church for more than a decade. Eventually, Salem Lutheran congregation erected a permanent home, dedicating it on July 4, 1940.

*Augustana Lutheran Church of Edmonton* was the result of a reorganization of the work which had ceased here in 1924. It was just a few months before the stock market "crash" of 1929 and the onset of the depression that Dr. Nelson officiated at the meeting which gave birth to the First Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Edmonton. The name was changed in 1941. Before the organization meeting a few worship services had been held in a room at the Y.M.C.A. Student Karl Wrick did the preliminary survey work. From 1939 Wetaskiwin and Clive were part of the parish. This arrangement ceased in 1952. At a special congregational meeting held November 23, 1939, the trustees were instructed to purchase the property at 9901 107 Street. One large room of the old house on this corner lot was remodeled and used as a chapel.

The climax of eight years of planning came on April 19, 1953, when the new Augustana Lutheran Church building was dedicated.

Services were held in Swedish until 1939 when English was introduced on alternate Sundays. In 1940, more services were in the language of the land, and in the next few years the transition to an all-English program was made.

On its first anniversary, the congregation received as a gift from the organization "Riksforeningen for Svenskhetens Bevarande i Utlandet" in Sweden, the beautiful Communion chalice and paten which is the proud possession of the congregation.

The congregation hit the newspaper headlines when an immense crane was used to install the spire of the new church. The property was further enhanced with the remodeling of a suite on the second floor of the parish hall to be used as an apartment for the pastor and his family. The congregation has since purchased a parsonage, removed the old house, and erected a functional parish education unit.

*Faith Ev. Lutheran Church of Rolling Hills*, was organized on March 12, 1942, with the Rev. Erni T. Holm leading the meeting. Work here had been going on for some years with summer students and other itinerant assistance. Active laymen have capably carried on during vacancies. On May 28, 1944, a chapel was moved to a lot northeast of the town and has served as the worship centre for this young congregation during the past years.

*Messiah Lutheran Church of Calgary* was the result of survey work in the Altadore area begun in January, 1954 by Sister Helen Eriksson. The first Sunday school was held on October 3rd, 1954 in the Altadore School auditorium with seven boys in the class taught by Sister Helen. Property was purchased on the northwest corner of 16A Street and 46th Avenue S.W. The first baptism took place during the Sunday school hour on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1954, Pastor L. C. Tengbom officiating. Groundbreaking took place June 5, 1954, for a parsonage chapel and a get-acquainted hour was held at the home of Pastor and Mrs. Tengbom. Dean Berg, pastor-elect, was present with the other Alberta District pastors. On July 5, 1954, Pastor Dean Berg moved to Calgary to become first pastor of the new Messiah Lutheran Mission. On September 25, 1955, the dedication of the parsonage-chapel took place. On this day, the first worship service was held with the Rev. Otto A. Olson as liturgist and Dr. Anton Nelson bringing a greeting on behalf of the Board of American Missions. The congregation was organized on Palm Sunday, March 25, 1956, with a charter membership of forty-four adults and a church school of fifty-seven. The first unit

of a fine new church building was erected and in the spring of 1958, during the meetings of the Canada Conference convention, the worship centre was dedicated.

*Trinity Lutheran Church of Stavely* came into being after a lengthy history of work by students and sporadic services conducted by pastors from Calgary. The Axel Sundquist home served as worship centre for these services. In 1950 the first student arrived in the area. Paul Erickson spent the summers of 1950 and 1951 holding services at Mountain Peak Hall and visiting the homes in the surrounding farmland. Garth Lof was the first intern to spend a year in the area, and with his coming services were held every Sunday. An extensive visitation program was held with a view toward organizing a congregation. The Sunday school was started and the Mission moved to the High School Gymnasium for the winter. Corliss Holmes replaced Garth Lof in January, 1956. On July 29 of that year the congregation was organized with twenty-three adult members and eighteen children. In January, 1957, when Student Norman Mattson was interning in the area, a parsonage was purchased. During the following year, Student Morris Green led the congregation in a building program which resulted in a handsome chapel being erected. The house of worship was dedicated in 1959. The first resident pastor came in 1960, when the Rev. James Chell came from Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island to minister to the congregation.

*Christ Lutheran Church of Edmonton* looks back to October, 1954, for the earliest beginnings of its history. It was at that time that the area in the west end of Edmonton was assigned to Augustana by the Alberta Regional Home Mission Committee of the Canadian Lutheran Council. Early in 1955, land was purchased from the city for a church site. Actual work on the field commenced in the spring of 1956. Sister Helen Eriksson began surveying the area for the Board of American Missions. On June 10 of that year, Mr. Stuart Lundahl and his family arrived on internship assignment from Augustana Theological Seminary, to work full time in the area. More than 1300 survey calls had been made and it was with this in hand that Mr. Lundahl began his work.

During August, 1956, thirty-five children from the Parkview area attended the Vacation Church School held at Augustana Lutheran Church in Edmonton. A chartered bus was used to transport them. The first worship service was held on September 9, 1956 at the Parkview School.

A lot, across from the church site and a small park, was purchased and by May, 1957, a parsonage was built there and ready for occupancy. On Sunday, October 6th, the first unit of the church was ready for use. The Rev. Daniel A. Dickhart came to serve the mission on July 10, 1957. The congregation was organized on November 24, 1957, with Dr. T. E. Matson, Executive Director of the Board of American Missions, and the Rev. L. Floyd Lewis, Regional Director for the Canada area, participating.

#### SASKATCHEWAN

*New Stockholm Ev. Lutheran Church of Stockholm*, Augustana's first congregation in Canada, has experienced an eventful history. In 1903, the first resident minister came to serve the New Stockholm Church. He preached his first message on the first Sunday in April, that year. It was a very significant and moving event. Rev. Lehart was escorted from the E. A. Berg home by the secretary, J. Teng, and met at the church by the chairman of the Board, M. A. Lindeblom, who escorted him to the front of the church while the congregation sang "O God Who Shepherds Giveth". The Rev. Hugh McKay of the Presbyterian Indian Mission at Round Lake gave the main address of welcome, mentioning his sympathetic interest in the work of the Lutheran Church and predicting that it would have a great future. A. G. Sahlmark spoke in reply and also gave an historical sketch of the congregation. Pastor Lehart gave his mes-

sage and the congregation parted with grateful hearts that they at last had their own pastor. In 1906, a parsonage was built on the church grounds, and though there have been alterations, the building still stands today. It was in use until the spring of 1958. The Canada Conference was organized at a meeting in the New Stockholm Church in the spring of 1913. It was about this time that the congregation began planning a larger church building. The plans resulted in the dedication, May 22, 1921, of a sturdy gothic style brick church with magnificent stained glass windows and oak furnishings. The Rev. G. A. Brandelle, then president of the Augustana Synod, conducted the dedication service. It is considered by many to be one of the finest country church buildings in all of Saskatchewan. In 1939 and 1959, the Canada Conference met in convention at New Stockholm Church, the 50th and 70th anniversary years of the congregation. In the fall of 1959, a three day anniversary observance brought several hundred people together for a thrilling program of inspiration and fellowship. Dr. Otto Olson, Conference president, gave the opening address; special programs and services were led by former Pastors William Petersen, Alfred Sander, O. E. Olmon and Ferdy Baglo. The observance climaxed in a closing rally at which Saskatchewan's premier, T. C. Douglas, gave the address. Many early pioneers were present for the Confirmation Reunion, including two members of the 1897 class, Mrs. Bill Waite (nee Anna Brita Jonson) now from Stockton, California, and Mr. Rudolph Sandmark of Stockholm.

*First Lutheran Church of Dubuc* was originally named "New Sweden Lutheran Congregation". Organized December 7, 1905, the church was composed of members who had recently come to Canada from Sweden. Services were held in the Freedhome School House and the Presbyterian Church. On July 13, 1909, the congregation decided to build a church and Peter Nelson, Axel Lindblad, E. A. Berg, Olof Oder, O. J. Englund, A. Gabrielson and Rev. P. A. Edquist were named to the building committee. Built by volunteer labour, the church was dedicated October 30, 1910, with Pastors L. P. Bergstrom, J. W. Dahlberg and P. A. Edquist participating. The problem of vacancies and the movement of the settlers away from the community made it difficult for First Lutheran Church to maintain a full church program. In 1960, the congregation joined the Melville parish of The American Lutheran Church.

*Zion Lutheran Church of Kinistino* was organized among a group of settlers who in 1902 arrived from Strandquist, Minnesota. The hardy pioneers discovered that Prince Albert was their nearest railway point and from there had to bring all their belongings by wagon drawn by horses and oxen the distance of sixty miles. Among the people was a God-loving and God-fearing man in the person of J. O. Johnson. He was never at a loss for words when he spoke of God's love and eternal salvation. He prayed, sang the praises of God with his fellow countrymen and conducted worship services for them. On January 7, 1905, a meeting was held, officers elected, and plans made to build a church. At about the same time it was learned that the Rev. Engebrektson was traveling missionary for the Norwegian Synod in this area of Canada. He held services in the "Norden" community about ten miles away. Although language might have proved a problem, the two communities did co-operate in planning their religious program. Services were held at someone's home. Announcement of a service was made by neighbours sending their youngster to the next farm with an invitation, and that one in turn sending someone by horseback through the community and so on. Pastor Engebrektson was followed by Rev. T. A. Johnson and J. O. Opstad. Baptismal and confirmation services were held, instruction classes and worship services conducted. The congregation did not join the Norwegian Synod because the settlers held out the hope that they one day might be served by a Swedish Lutheran pastor. On January 16, 1911, their hopes were fulfilled in the person of the Rev. L. P. Bergstrom who came from

Winnipeg to conduct an organization meeting. The Rev. Abr. Wattman was present and elected secretary for the meeting. The name "Svenska Evangeliska Lutheriska Sions församlingen uti Kinistino, Sask., Canada," was chosen. Unfortunately, services were not held regularly during the first few years. The first pastor to reside in the community was C. O. Bostrom who came August 1, 1918. The following year a new, large parsonage was built. In March, 1920, the Canada Conference convention was held in Zion Church. A male quartet of pastors is remembered as being an inspiration at the meetings. The men singing were pastors Bostrom, Magney, Melander and Philip Johnson. The convention came to an unexpected climax when a storm left the departing delegates and pastors snowbound in the Beatty railroad station. They evidently spent their time singing and holding services while the storm raged in all its fury outside. For many years the congregation was served for a few months or a few years at a time by resident pastors. In 1946, lay preacher R. Odelberg came to serve the congregation and continued until he retired in the community in 1956. In 1957, the Presbyterian Church building was purchased in Kinistino and was remodeled and redecorated to serve as the new church home for the congregation. In 1960, a modern parsonage was erected to serve as the home for Pastor and Mrs. Paul Eriksson and their family, with parish hall facilities in the basement.

*Salem Lutheran Church (now Christ Ev. Lutheran Church) of Young*, was organized in the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Bjork in 1911. During the first year, services were held in the Bjork home, then in the Mission Covenant Church and in the town school. In 1918, a parsonage was purchased and after a few years the ground floor was made into a chapel leaving the upstairs as living quarters. Pastor O. Philip Johnson came to serve the congregation from 1918 to 1926. In 1946, the building was entirely remodeled, making a chapel and fellowship hall. In 1954, the congregation rejoiced when the mortgage was burned. In 1956, Salem Church federated with Christ Lutheran Church of the U.L.C.A. and called the Rev. Robert Erickson to be the first resident minister of the re-organized parish. The U.L.C.A. parsonage and church were used and the Augustana chapel put to use as parish education building. In 1958 the two churches merged, taking the name Christ Lutheran Church, and becoming a member congregation of the Canada Conference.

*Bethel Lutheran Church of Marchwell* was organized July 29, 1911, as the "Swedish Ev. Lutheran Church" of Marchwell. The following year a church was built for \$1,000 and in 1918, a parsonage was added to the congregation's properties. Pastor N. L. Melander, the congregation's first full-time resident minister, served the congregation from 1919 to 1922. In 1950 the congregation took the name "Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church".

*Elim Lutheran Church of Theodore* was a Christmas gift to the community in the year 1912. Just nine days before the anniversary of our Lord's birth, the congregation was organized by Dr. L. P. Bergstrom. Pastor N. L. Melander was recommended for call to the parish which included Marchwell, in 1919. Perhaps the most memorable ministry at Theodore was during the years of Pastor Melander. With his violin tucked beneath his arm, he had a method of bringing the message of the church both in word and song to the community. One incident which people still remember occurred during the spring of 1921 when Pastor Melander found it necessary to walk through heavy timber land for a distance of nine miles in order to reach a preaching point for services one Sunday morning. On the way he lost his direction and five hours after the time he should have arrived, he appeared at the homesteaders door where he was to stay. He had fallen into a slough and was mud to his waist. After he had gone to bed, the housewife heated water after midnight and washed his suit and Pastor Melander apparently stayed in bed until it was dry the next day. It was

dry just in time for the afternoon service. In recent years the congregation has been in a parish with Buchanan. In 1959, a beautiful new parsonage was erected next to the church, with parish hall facilities in the basement.

*Elim Lutheran Church of Buchanan* was organized just a short few months after Elim of Theodore. Norwegians and Swedes were together in one congregation until an unfortunate dispute drove them asunder. A church building was erected in 1919. Through the years, despite the "divorce" the two Lutheran congregations have co-operated. Young people were trained and confirmed by which ever congregation had the pastor and their names inscribed on each other's books. Intermarriage further confused the issue. All was resolved in 1959 when the two congregations, realizing that their separate existence was maintained at the expense of their opportunity for spiritual enrichment and service, reunited. The new congregation took the name Faith Lutheran Church, remodeled and refinished the E.L.C. church in town as worship centre, and joined the Augustana Lutheran Church. It was during the ministry of Pastor Vernon Sundmark that the congregation's spiritual life was revitalized.

*Bethesda Lutheran Church of Beatty* was another of the congregations which was served for some years by the Norwegian Synod in the person of Pastor O. J. Opstad. September 8, 1907 was the date of the first service. Carl Hagglund was elected secretary of the unofficial congregation. On June 23, 1911, a decision was made to erect a church "on August Nordin's land". The following year, Pastor L. P. Bergstrom was present for the organization of the new Swedish Lutheran congregation. The congregation joined in a parish arrangement with Zion Church of Kinistino and was served by pastors and students from the latter congregation.

*Emanuel Lutheran Church of Assiniboia* was organized in 1913 under student preacher C. Zaar. A church building was erected and dedicated in 1917. The problems of large farms, mixed denominational allegiances, and the constant movement of settlers has made the history of the congregation largely a recital of difficult times. In 1956, the congregation mothered Messiah Lutheran Church of Assiniboia, and there followed a renewed interest in the country congregation. The church, although serving only a few remaining families in the area, has reached out to people of other denominational backgrounds who are not being served.

*Salem Lutheran Church of Shaunavon* is the climax of a series of mergers of Augustana congregations in the rural area surrounding this southern Saskatchewan town. The earliest congregation in the area was Lebanon Church organized at the home of Mr. and Mrs. S. Persson, in 1910. Next to organize was Zion Lutheran Church which came into being on the seventh of June, 1914, at a meeting held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Anderson, ten miles southeast of Shaunavon. Prior to the organization Pastors O. Philip Johnson and K. J. Bring had held services in farm homes. Mrs. Emma Ellington recalls, "Pastor Bring's locomotion was horse and buggy in summer, team and jumper in winter. He was always there on the day and the hour appointed, in spite of rain in summer and blizzard in winter. Often reaching our home, his horse would rest while my brothers would drive him around to the different congregations and preaching points, sometimes as far as Lake Pelletier with our old brass front model T."

Third in the series of congregations to organize in the vicinity of Shaunavon was Malmo congregation of Scotsguard. Mrs. Martin Tengesdal recalls how ladies from the Zion congregation and those from the Malmo congregation would drive twelve to fourteen miles by buggy to attend Ladies' Aid meetings. "Of course, the whole family would come along, the ladies usually sitting in the living room while the men had a good visit outside." Last of the congregations was Salem Lutheran Church organized March 22, 1916. The first worship ser-

vices were held in the parsonage, built in 1916. Pastor Abr. Wattman became the first resident minister, but his ministry was cut short when he became a victim of the 1919 flu epidemic. The Salem congregation suffered a setback from which it did not recover until 1927 when a church building program re-awakened interest in the work of the congregation. Key men in the building of the church and reorganizing of the work were Messrs. Bill Pohlman, Olaf Nelson, John Krause, W. Christianson, Emil Walfridson, Henry Kronberg and Charlie Golem. The church building was dedicated in 1929. The Lebanon and Malmo congregations passed silently from the scene. Zion congregation merged with Salem Church in 1932.

*First Lutheran Church of Churchbridge*, was organized in 1919. The congregation had no church building of its own, and held services in various buildings. In 1959 the congregation was dissolved and the membership transferred to the Missouri Synod congregation in the town.

*St. Peter's Lutheran Church of Meacham* has a rather involved history. Originally it was organized in 1908 in the country as a congregation of the United Norwegian Synod. In 1920, some of the members decided to interview all the Lutherans in the Meacham district and it was decided that since there was a majority of Swedish members, the congregation would re-organize, locating in the town of Meacham. The Norwegian members remained in the original location, but took the name St. John's Lutheran Church, while the Swedes organized a new St. Peter's in town. Pastor O. Philip Johnson of Young was contacted. The first worship service was held at the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Emil Carlson. Alternate services in Swedish and English were held in Meacham High School. The first confirmation class was instructed and conducted in four languages: Swedish, Norwegian, English and German. Early statistics are complicated by the fact that the books for St. John's and St. Peter's were never properly co-related. When Augustana found it impossible to serve Meacham, the Missouri Synod stepped in with a pastor coming from Humboldt. In 1928, the congregation joined the Canada Conference and has since been served by Augustana either from Saskatoon or Young. In 1951 a building was purchased from the Mennonites and hauled many miles into Meacham and erected on property at the edge of town. The building was altered and dedicated the same year. There is a Lutheran cemetery owned by the congregation and located some four miles from town.

*Augustana Lutheran Church of Saskatoon* was organized as a result of mission work done in the city by Mr. E. H. Peterson of Young, and Dr. Nelson, then residing in Calgary, Alberta. Services were conducted in the Y.M.C.A. where an organization service was held on March 9, 1929. No intensive work was done in the city until the end of the year. On August 11, 1930, the congregation decided to purchase the present site of the church on the corner of Broadway and Seventh Street. On October 3 it was decided to build a church basement and on December 14 of the same year, the basement sanctuary was dedicated. For many years the basement served as a meeting place for the congregation. Mr. Fred Shoquist acted as superintendent of construction which was carried out with a good deal of volunteer labor. At the annual meeting in 1936 it was decided to go ahead with the construction of the church building over the basement. The cornerstone was laid on October 18, 1936 and construction carried on during the winter. The superstructure was finished in the spring and the church was dedicated April 7, 1937. Pastor Anton Nelson served the congregation until 1945. When Pastor Carlton Berg came to serve the congregation in 1950, the parsonage at 615 - 7th Street was purchased. A new building program was entered upon in 1958 when a large basement parish education addition was erected. The superstructure for this addition and a new tower were constructed in 1960. The complete building program will include an entirely new

worship centre. An attractive design with the unique tower, based upon an old Swedish bell-tower, will make the completed building a landmark in the city and an efficient centre of Christian work and worship.

*Central Lutheran Church of Regina* was organized under the name "United Ev. Lutheran Church" on January 5, 1933, in the Orange Hall. The congregation was the result of five years of missionary endeavour by the Rev. Anton A. Nelson assisted by Mrs. Edna (Johnson) Dahlquist. The Rev. J. E. Samuelson became the first resident pastor. There were difficult years during the depression, with worship services held in rented halls. In the summer of 1938 an old building was purchased from the Canadian Pacific Railway, wrecked and moved to Garnet Street. On November 7, the cornerstone was laid for the contemplated house of worship. A basement twenty-eight feet by fifty-four feet became the congregation's spiritual home on December 18 of the same year. On August 8, 1944, the congregation voted to purchase the house on 1902 Smith Street and to offer the Garnet Street property for sale. The Smith Street residence was remodeled into a chapel and parsonage, and the church's name changed to Central Ev. Lutheran Church. Plans by the city of Regina for a civic centre prevented the erection of a new sanctuary on the property. Negotiations for purchase of the First Church of the Nazarene property at Angus Street and 12th Avenue were completed and the former property sold to the city. The Nazarene church was renovated and made into an attractive Lutheran house of worship. A parsonage was acquired on 1950 Cameron Street. This house was exchanged for a more suitable bungalow at 2043 Athol Street in 1954. When the Canada Conference Convention was held at Central Church in Regina in 1955, the site for a new church building was dedicated. Several years of endeavour resulted in the fine modern church building which was dedicated on Palm Sunday, 1958. The congregation has grown to the extent that it is one of the two largest Augustana congregations in Canada. The parsonage is now located at 31 Portland Crescent.

#### MANITOBA

*St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Winnipeg* was Augustana's second congregation in Canada. The name chosen at organization was "Sion". In recent years the congregation changed its name and erected one of the largest and finest of Augustana's church plants in Canada, located at Cambridge and Corydon.

*Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Erickson* was organized May 23, 1891. The Rev. B. O. Berg became the first resident pastor when he took up the work in 1898 with a salary of \$125 per year plus firewood, and hay for one horse and one cow. The Mission Board assisted with \$375 a year towards the total \$500 salary. The congregation erected a parsonage prior to the pastor's arrival on the field. When soliciting for funds and labor the rule was "Landowners to give twice as much as single men". An organ was purchased for the church for \$90 worth of cordwood. In February, 1894, one of Augustana's first Sunday schools was established with A. Lundgren as superintendent. In 1900 Chris Orten gave a half acre of land on N.E. 17-18-18 where a small church was later erected and a cemetery located. In 1901 the congregation held a 10th Anniversary celebration. The same year the Norwegian members of the congregation made a request to form a separate congregation. This was done and Betania (Norge) congregation was organized and served jointly with Bethlehem. In 1911 a building program was initiated and on June 29, 1913, Dr. L. P. Bergstrom presided at the dedication services for the new edifice at Scandinavia. At the annual meeting on the 11th of January, 1915, it was decided to put up a building in Erickson. The work began immediately. A basement was built and in the later part of the summer Pastor L. P. Bergstrom and V. J. Tengwald and student John Bildt took part in the cornerstone laying. The third annual meeting of the Canada Conference took place at Bethlehem Church March 30 to April 9, 1916.

During 1916 the church building at Erickson was completed. In 1921, President G. A. Brandelle of the Augustana Synod dedicated the completed building. In 1938, the church at Erickson was moved in to the town. A significant ministry was performed by lay-preacher Richard Odelberg who served the congregation from 1923 until 1940, a period of nearly seventeen years. During this time he instructed for confirmation nearly one hundred children.

In September, 1941, the Golden Jubilee of the congregation was celebrated with festal services attended by several hundred people. Student L. C. Tengbom directed the celebration. Pastors Ludwig Melander, C. E. Cederberg, Herman Anderson and C. E. Hoffsten participated in the services.

Although the congregation had been divided into two sections, one at the original settlement of Scandinavia and the other in Erickson, it remained for some years as one congregation with two church buildings. In 1959 the congregation entered into a federation agreement with two Lutheran Free Church congregations: Bethel at Danvers and Immanuel at Clanwilliam. The federated parish was first served by a Lutheran Free Church pastor, the Rev. Oscar Johnson. The Rev. J. Fredrickson, serving with the Augustana Church, is now the pastor of the federated parish. Two young men have heard the call to the gospel ministry and have gone out from the Erickson congregation: the Rev. Vernon Sundmark and the Rev. Donald Sjoberg.

#### ONTARIO

*Bethesda Lutheran Church of Kenora* was organized on August 16, 1894. The community, then known as Rat Portage (named by the Indians as the "road to the muskrat country"), had been incorporated only twelve years before. The cornerstone for the church building was laid on November 4, 1894, and although the building was a mere framework, the first "Julotta" service was held at six a.m. with folks seated on planks supported by barrels and boxes. There being no Lutheran clergyman in the city, Canon Page of St. Alban's Pro-Cathedral (Anglican) officiated at the service. The church was dedicated on October 6, 1895, and remains the oldest Augustana church building still in use in Canada. The original name of the congregation, "Swedish Bethesda Lutheran Church" was changed to the present name in 1936, at the same time as English became regularly used in the program of the congregation. The congregation has sent several sons into the ministry. Tyre Anderson lived only a short time after his ordination. His son is the Rev. Luther Anderson of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Earl Anderson was ordained in the Canada Synod of the U.L.C.A. Morris Green, ordained May 31, 1959, in his home church, served the Lac du Bonnet congregation, Lutheran Church of the Cross, for a time and now serves a U.L.C.A. church in Regina. The largest congregation in the Canada Conference, Bethesda Church has outgrown and outworn the old building which has served as a centre of Lutheran worship for so many years. A major building program is now being planned.

*Zion Ev. Lutheran Church of Fort Frances* was organized in 1919 by the Rev. Peter Hanson and until 1958 remained a congregation of the Minnesota Conference. For many years the congregation was served from International Falls, Minnesota. From 1955 with the arrival of Pastor Dean E. Lindquist, the congregation was served by a resident minister, with Stratton, Deerlock and Bergland as preaching places. The church building was erected in 1930, the parsonage built in 1955.

*Trinity Lutheran Church of Bergland* was organized October 2, 1933. The congregation was formerly associated with the United Norwegian Synod. In January, 1934, a letter arrived from the Rev. A. M. Gustafson of Ely, Minn. regarding Theol. Student Kenneth Peterson of Rock Island. The young man was willing to come to the field after ordination for the sum of \$200 a year

if the congregation would give half the sum. Plans for building a church were shelved in favour of erection of a four-room cottage for a parsonage. A member recalls, "Kenneth Peterson stayed a while with the Tofte and when Mrs. Tofte found out he had a sweetheart who could play and sing she immediately suggested that he should get married as soon as possible as an organist was very badly needed. So, after many letters and telegrams the lady of his choice was on her way from Kansas. They met in International Falls and Pastor Berg performed the marriage ceremony and brought them to Bergland. By then two rooms of the cottage had been furnished by the Ladies' Aid and a supper was served to the congregation, the newly-weds and Pastor and Mrs. Berg. The Petersons were here about three years and by then the other two rooms of the parsonage were finished."

Pastor C. D. Mattson came in May 1938 and remained for four years, preaching the Gospel and conducting Sunday Schools and Vacation Church Schools in ten different places round about. Esther Olson, now Mrs. N. L. Melander, served as parish worker in the area for several months. Another young lady who later became a pastor's wife, Marie Van't Hull (now Mrs. Alfred Sander) served for a short time as parish worker in the area. Another parish worker, Anna Wendell, served the congregation and surrounding area faithfully during the 'thirties and 'forties. The last resident pastor was the Rev. Clarence W. Thorwald who came in June, 1946, and spent two years in the field. It is surprising to note how many foreign missionaries served this congregation. Elder Jackson spent a Christmas season in the parish: George Olson, missionary to Japan, also spent a Christmastime; others were Emma Isaacson and Della Brown.

Miss Anna Wendell is remembered in the area for her many fine years of dedicated service. A member of the former Augustana congregation at Stratton, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, remembers how fond Miss Wendell was of chicken. One summer when leaving on her holidays she gave her few remaining eggs to Mrs. Oren. Mrs. Oren put them under a hen and when Miss Wendell came back she had a batch of chickens. She cared for them in the churchyard, put up roosts in the garage and in the fall killed and canned them with the help of Mrs. Oren and Mrs. Morken. Another time, Miss Wendell found a chicken on the back bumper of her car. Upon checking she found it had got on there to roost the night before while Miss Wendell was visiting a family at Deerlock, twenty-five miles away. It rode all the way on the bumper. Miss Wendell kept it, fattened it, and killed it, having another good feast. The Deerlock youngster who owned it was paid for his loss.

So we come to the end of our "potpourri" of facts and figures, anecdotes and stories illustrating the history and development of individual congregations of the Augustana Church in Canada. Much more could be and should be written about the past eight decades during which Augustana has laboured in Canada. Perhaps, some day, a further history will be published which will contain material not available at this present time. It is hoped that the foregoing pages will bring back happy memories to oldtimers and promote better understanding of past events by all.

## EPILOGUE

History continues to be written each day, and the story of Augustana has not yet been completed, though its name will no longer appear on the roster of Lutheran churches in North America when 1963 begins.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church at Laclu, Ontario voted to dissolve at the end of 1961, and most of the members of that group are now united with Bethany Church in west Kenora. During 1961 new missions have been begun at High River in Alberta, and at east Haney, near Webster's Corners, in British Columbia. Even now we do not know if there will be forty-nine, fifty or fifty-one Augustana congregations in Canada at the time our stream of life flows together with those of other church bodies at the end of 1962 to form the Lutheran Church in America.

The only life that the church has is realized in the life of its congregations. While the reality of the wider fellowship—the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints—gives meaning and validity to the larger church organizations, even this cannot be expressed apart from participation in a local congregation.

A word of caution is in order as we think of the many Augustana congregations which have had shorter or longer periods of life during the past seventy or eighty years, but which no longer exist today. Perhaps some should not have been organized. No doubt some would be alive today if some people had acted differently or if certain circumstances had been altered. On the other hand, it is equally possible that even the most short-lived congregation existed for a purpose and made its contribution to the eternal well-being of some of the members of the family of God.

As the faith and work of our pioneers is this year to flow through us into a larger stream of faith and work, let it not be forgotten that the influence of the fathers will continue with us for generations—thousands of them, if our Lord tarries.

There is reason for rejoicing as we become a part of the Lutheran Church in America, in which there will be congregations in all but one of Canada's ten provinces, plus a congregation in the Yukon Territory. The three synods of this Church in Canada will comprise the Lutheran Church in America—Canada Section, an organization with considerable independent authority and responsibility in Canadian affairs.

Finally, let us pray that the Lord of the Church will lead us into one Lutheran Church in our country, a Church which will also have God-pleasing relationships with our brethren who honourably bear the name of our God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Appendix I***Augustana Lutheran Congregations in Canada**

No.	Date Organized	Province	Place	Status
1	1889	Saskatchewan	New Stockholm	Active
2	1890	Manitoba	Winnipeg	Active
3	1891	Manitoba	Erickson	Active
4	1894	Ontario	Kenora (Bethesda)	Active
5	1897	Saskatchewan	Percival	Merged in 1958
6	1897	Saskatchewan	Fleming	Dissolved, 1951
7	1897	Manitoba	Whitemouth	Dissolved, 1923
8	1897	Manitoba	Tyndall	Dissolved, 1910
9	1898	Alberta	Water Glen (Svea)	Active
10	1898	Alberta	Wetaskiwin (Bethlehem)	Active
11	1900	Alberta	Calgary (First)	Active
12	1901	Alberta	Clive	Active
13	1901	Alberta	Burnt Lake	Dissolved, 1933
14	1901	Manitoba	Danvers	Dissolved, 1910
15	1902	Alberta	Camrose (Fridhem)	Active —
16	1903	Alberta	Calmar	Dissolved, 1919
17	1903	British Columbia	Vancouver	Active —
18	1904	British Columbia	Golden	Dissolved, 1910
19	1904	Alberta	Stettler	Dissolved, 1915
20	1905	Alberta	Falun	Dissolved, 1920
21	1905	Alberta	Stavely	Dissolved, 1909
22	1905	Alberta	Brightview	Dissolved, 1938
23	1905	Alberta	Claresholm	Dissolved, 1910
24	1905	Saskatchewan	Dubuc	Transferred, 1961
25	1905	Saskatchewan	Archive	Dissolved, 1956
26	1906	Alberta	Meeting Creek	Active
27	1906	Ontario	Port Arthur	Active
28	1906	Ontario	Fort William	Active
29	1906	British Columbia	Mabel Lake	Dissolved, 1915
30	1907	Saskatchewan	Parkman	Dissolved, 1952
31	1908	Alberta	Hay Lakes	Active —
32	1908	Alberta	Westrose	Dissolved, 1919
33	1909	Saskatchewan	Kipling	Dissolved, 1958
34	1909	British Columbia	New Westminster	Active
35	1910	Saskatchewan	Kinistino	Active
36	1910	Saskatchewan	Kelliher	Active
37	1910	Saskatchewan	Wadena	Dissolved, 1952
38	1910	Manitoba	Inwood	Dissolved, 1952
39	1910	Alberta	Amisk (Hughenden)	Active
40	1910	Alberta	Czar	Active
41	1910	British Columbia	Rossland	Dissolved, 1914
42	1911	Saskatchewan	Young	Merged, 1958
43	1911	Saskatchewan	Waldeck	Dissolved, 1924
44	1911	Saskatchewan	Marchwell	Active —
45	1911	Saskatchewan	Gull Lake <sup>1</sup>	Dissolved, 1924
46	1912	Saskatchewan	Admiral	Dissolved, 1958
47	1912	Saskatchewan	Buchanan	Active
48	1912	Saskatchewan	Theodore	Active

<sup>1</sup>Libanon, Gull Lake, appears in statistics until 1920, then becomes Libanon, Shaunavon, with organization date of 1914 reported.

No.	Date Organized	Province	Place	Status
49	1912	Saskatchewan	Beatty	Active -
50	1912	Manitoba	Ericksdale	Dissolved, 1957
51	1913	Alberta	Kingman	Dissolved, 1953
52	1913	Saskatchewan	Assiniboia (Emanuel)	Active -
53	1914	Manitoba	Lillesve	Dissolved, 1957
54	1914	Saskatchewan	Shaunavon (Zion)	Dissolved, 1933
55	1914	Saskatchewan	Scotsguard	Dissolved, 1926
56	1914	Saskatchewan	Goodwater	Dissolved, 1939
57	1914	Manitoba	Lac du Bonnet (Ebenezer)	Dissolved, 1959
58	1914	Alberta	Edmonton	Dissolved, 1923
59	1916	Saskatchewan	Shaunavon (Salem)	Active -
60	1916	Saskatchewan	Abbey	Dissolved, 1924
61	1917	Manitoba	Fisherton	Dissolved, 1923
62	1918	Manitoba	Teulon	Dissolved, 1923
63	1919	Alberta	Donalda	Dissolved, 1923
64	1919	Alberta	Scandia	Active -
65	1919	Saskatchewan	Churchbridge	Dissolved, 1958
66	1919	Saskatchewan	Kamsack	Dissolved, 1942
67	1919	Quebec	Montreal	Dissolved, 1942
68	1919	Ontario	Fort Frances	Active ]
69	1920	Saskatchewan	Meacham	Active ]
70	1920	Saskatchewan	Punnichy	Dissolved, 1942
71	1929	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon	Active ]
72	1929	Alberta	Edmonton (Augustana)	Active ]
73	1930	Saskatchewan	Moose Jaw	Dissolved, 1935
74	1931	Alberta	Valley View	Dissolved, 1956
75	1933	Saskatchewan	Regina	Active -
76	1933	Saskatchewan	Snowden	Dissolved, 1956
77	1933	Ontario	Bergland	Active -
78	1934	Ontario	Stratton	Dissolved, 1959
79	1934	Ontario	Deerlock	Dissolved, 1959
80	1935	Saskatchewan	Polwarth	Dissolved, 1953
81	1937	Ontario	Rainy River	Transferred, 1952
82	1940	Ontario	Laclu	Dissolved, 1961
83	1942	Alberta	Rolling Hills	Active ]
84	1948	British Columbia	Haney	Active
85	1951	British Columbia	North Burnaby	Active
86	1952	Saskatchewan	Assiniboia (Messiah)	Active
87	1952	Alberta	Camrose (Bethel)	Active
88	1954	Ontario	Kenora (Bethany)	Active
89	1955	Saskatchewan	Broadview	Merged in 1958
90	1956	Alberta	Calgary (Messiah)	Active ]
91	1957	Alberta	Stavely	Active
92	1957	Alberta	Edmonton (Christ)	Active
93	1958	Saskatchewan	Broadview	Active
94	1958	Saskatchewan	Young (Christ)	Active
95	1958	Ontario	Atikokan	Active
96	1959	Manitoba	Lac du Bonnet (Cross)	Active
97	1959	Alberta	Wainwright	Active
98	Received in 1961	Saskatchewan	Clayridge (St. John's)	Active (from ULCA)
99	Received in 1961	Saskatchewan	Gull Lake (Good Hope)	Active ] (from ALC)
100	1961	British Columbia	North Vancouver	Active ]

*Appendix II***Augustana Pastors Living and Working in Canada**

<i>From</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Place or Call</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1892	1898	Udden, Svante	Winnipeg	
1895	1897	Helander, A. C.	Kenora	(1)
1898	1901	Berg, B. O.	Erickson	
1899	1900	Larson, G. S.	Kenora	
1899	1900	Rehner, E.	Winnipeg	
1901	1903	Mattson, J. A.	Winnipeg	
1901	1902	Berg, B. O.	Kenora	
1902	1906	Almgren, P.	Wetaskiwin	(2)
1903	1907	Lehart, N.	New Stockholm	(3)
1903	1906	Rosenthal, Kr.	Erickson	
1903	1907	Olson, A. G.	Kenora	
1905	1908	Fihm, L. J.	Calgary	
1906	1908	Sjogren, L. N.	Fort William	(1)
1906	1907	Ryden, A. J.	Winnipeg	
1906	1914	Lindgren, O.	Camrose	(1)
1907	1914	Dahlberg, J. G.	Winnipeg	
1908	1912	Frodeen, J. J.	Wetaskiwin	(3)
1908	1913	Olander, C. O.	Fort William	
1908	1914	Edquist, P. A.	Stockholm	
1908	1915	Swanson, C. R.	Vancouver	(1)
1909	1916	Bergstrom, L. P.	Mission Superintendent	
1910	1910	Edman, E.	Moose Jaw	
1911	1912	Kallberg, A. J.	Calgary	
1911	1917	Lindquist, J. O.	Kenora	(1)
1912	1913	Nelson, O. B.	Calgary	
1912	1917	Thunberg, Claes	Percival	(1)
1913	1914	Olson, F. E.	Fort William	
1913	1927	Bring, K. J.	Waldeck	(3)
1913	1914	Tengwald, V. J.	Calgary	
1913	1915	Anderson, Carl E.	Rossland, New Westminster	(1)
1914	1927	Lindgren, O.	Czar	(2, 3)
1914	1920	Tengwald, V. J.	Winnipeg	(2)
1914	1920	Edquist, P. A.	Fort William	(2)
1915	1918	Heiner, L.	Camrose	(3)
1915	1919	Olmon, O. E.	Stockholm	(1)
1915	1919	Zaar, Carl G.	Vancouver	
1916	1922	Eklund, Otto	Meeting Creek	(1)
1916	1919	Wattman, Abr.	Shaunavon	(3)
1917	1918	Forslund, J. A.	Wetaskiwin	
1917	1919	Eriksson, E. M.	Edmonton	
1917	1920	Thunberg, Claes	Moose Jaw	(2)
1918	1919	Bengtson, C. A.	Percival	(1)
1918	1920	Bostrom, C. O.	Kinistino	(1)
1918	1919	Lindberg, J. W.	Kenora	
1918	1920	Magney, H. S.	Buchanan	(1)
1918	1924	Johnson, O. Philip	Young	(1)
1918	1920	Larson, C. A.	Parkman	
1918	1920	Larson, J. A.	Erickson	
1919	1920	Hakanson, B.	Eriksdale	
1919	1922	Melander, L.	Marchwell	(1)

From	to	Name	Place or Call	Notes
1919	1920	Peterson, C. P.	Teulon	(1)
1919	1924	Nordstrom, J. P.	Calgary	
1919	1920	Swensson, Samuel R.	Montreal	
1920	1922	Pearsen, N. H.	Fort William	
1920	1925	Kaeiding, R.	Percival	
1920	1922	Gronberg, C. G.	Stockholm	
1920	1921	Lundahl, N. J.	Edmonton	
1920	1924	Alexander, L.	Wetaskiwin	(3)
1920	1921	Sjoding, A.	Stockholm	(3)
1920	1921	Larson, J. A.	Winnipeg	(2)
1920	1925	Larson, C. A.	Wadena	(2)
1920	1921	Nordlander, P. H.	Vancouver	(1)
1920	1921	Byrenius, Ragnar	Montreal	
1921	1928	Peterson, C. P.	Kenora	(2)
1921	1930	Lundahl, N. J.	Stockholm	(2)
1922	1925	Anderson, C. A.	Winnipeg	(1)
1922	1930	Gronberg, C. G.	Camrose	(2)
1922	1927	Eklund, Otto	Vancouver	(2)
1922	1923	Ardahl, O. H.	Fort William	
1923	1940	Odelberg, R.	Erickson	
1924	1926	Ternberg, E. S.	Fort William	
1924	1929	Nelson, Anton A.	Calgary	(1)
1924	1931	Nordstrom, J. P.	Kinistino	(2)
1924	1931	Miller, O. H.	Wetaskiwin	
1926	1927	Bergstrom, L. P.	Winnipeg	(2)
1927	1927	Isaacson, E. V.	Percival	
1927	1929	Olson, Hj.	Winnipeg	(1)
1927	1931	Almen, A. P.	Shaunavon	(1)
1927	1928	Anderson, A. G.	Vancouver	
1928	1929	Carlson, J. E.	Czar	
1928	1931	Karlstrom, Otto	Vancouver	
1928	1935	Westling, O. W.	New Westminster, Vancouver	
1929	1929	Olson, Edward	Kenora	
1929	1931	Eriksson, A. E.	Moose Jaw	(1)
1929	1930	Bergquist, J. E.	Kenora	(1)
1929	1942	Salomonson, A. F.	Percival	
1929	1932	Samuelson, J. E.	Calgary	
1929	1931	Engstrom, G. A. O.	Edmonton	
1929	1945	Nelson, Anton A.	Saskatoon	(2)
1929	1930	Olson, F. E.	Kelliher	(2)
1930	1934	Vikman, J. A.	Winnipeg	
1930	1936	Anderson, H.	Kenora	
1930	1951	Eklund, Otto	Meeting Creek	(2)
1930	1932	Larson, J.	Young	
1930	1936	Larson, J. H.	Shaunavon	
1930	1932	Goranson, Gunnar	Montreal	
1930	1937	Peterson, Pontus	Fort William	
1931	1936	Johnson, V. E.	Kinistino	
1931	1936	Franzen, A. E.	Edmonton	(1)
1931	1937	Eriksson, A. E.	Camrose	(2, 3)
1931	1940	Miller, O. H.	Wetaskiwin	(2, 3)
1931	1931	Carlson, J. E.	Vancouver	
1932	1938	Bernhardson, C. W.	Czar	
1933	1933	Samuelson, J. E.	Regina	(2)
1933	1933	Nordstrom, J. P.	Calgary	(2, 3)

<i>From</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Place or Call</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1933	1934	Benson, Wilbert	Montreal	
1934	1936	Olson, F. E.	Calgary-Scandia	(2)
1934	1938	Erling, Bertil A.	Winnipeg	
1934	1936	Bjork, G. Emmanuel	Regina	
1934	1936	Peterson, Kenneth	Bergland	(1)
1935	1936	Vikman, J. A.	Stockholm	(2)
1936	1937	Bjork, G. Emmanuel	Young-Kelliher	(2)
1936	1951	Vikman, G. A.	Edmonton	(2)
1936	1939	Larson, J. H.	Kinistino	(2)
1936	1943	Anderson, H.	Stockholm	(2)
1936	1937	Menton, Zack	Montreal	
1936	1939	Mattson, Oscar W.	Vancouver	(1)
1937	1937	Johnson, V. E.	Snowden-Regina	(2)
1938	1943	Kron, Reuben	Shaunavon	
1938	1943	Holm, Ernie T.	Scandia	(1)
1938	1949	Larson, Theodore	Kenora	(1)
1938	1939	Grahn, Gustav	Winnipeg	
1938	1947	Bernhardson, C. A.	Camrose (CLBI)	(2,3)
1938	1942	Mattson, C. D.	Bergland	
1939	1939	Johnson, V. E.	Snowden	(2)
1939	1941	Bomgren, Linne E.	Fort William	(1)
1940	1945	Benson, John Luther	Calgary	
1940	1948	Hoffsten, C. E.	Winnipeg	
1940	1944	Norbeck, Nels	Vancouver	
1941	1945	Cederberg, C. E.	Marchwell	
1941	1945	Hassel, Henning L.	Kinistino	
1941	1944	Odelberg, R.	Regina	Lay preacher (2)
1942	1943	Nelson, O. H.	Czar	
1942	1944	Larson, Carl A. A.	Erickson	(1)
1942	1942	Benson, John L.	Vancouver (Chinese Mission)	
1942	1946	Lindbeck, J. Walter	Vancouver (Chinese Mission)	
1942	1949	Nordale, Theodore B.	Fort William	
1944	1949	Olson, Oscar L.	Vancouver	
1945	1949	Monson, Gilbert E.	Saskatoon	
1945	1949	Lundmark, G. Uno	Shaunavon	(1)
1945	1949	Swenson, Paul	Scandia	(1, 3)
1945	1948	Nelson, Anton A.	Regina	(2)
1945	1951	Hassel, Henning L.	Percival	(2)
1945	1951	Olson, Otto A.	New Westminster	(1)
1946	1956	Odelberg, R.	Kinistino	Lay preacher (2)
1946	1956	Tengbom, Luverne C.	Calgary	(1)
1946	1947	Thorwald, C. W.	Bergland	
1947	1950	Benson, John, Jr.	Vancouver (Chinese Mission)	
1948	1950	Nelson, George A.	Erickson	(1)
1948	1952	Carlson, A. Wallace	Marchwell	(1)
1948	1953	Swedberg, Richard A.	Regina	(1)
1948	1956	Nelson, Anton A.	(Fargo, N.D.) Regional Director	(2)
1948	1955	Pearson, C. Robert	Camrose (parish)	(1)
1949	1953	Olson, O. Arnold	Vancouver	
1949	1951	Petersen, William S.	Stockholm	(1)
1949	1951	Johnson, Floyd E.	Kenora	
1949	1952	Berg, Carlton	Saskatoon	
1949	1951	Monson, Gilbert T.	Saskatoon (Seminary)	(2)
1949	1957	Lundmark, G. Uno	Winnipeg	(2)
1950	1951	Nordstrand, Arthur	North Burnaby	(1)

From	To	Name	Place or Call	Notes
1950	1953	Carlson, Harvey N.	Fort William	(1)
1951	1960	Olson, Otto A.	Saskatoon (Seminary)	(2)
1951	1955	Anderson, Hugo	Kenora	(1)
1951	1953	Vikman, J. Arvid	North Burnaby	(2, 3)
1951	1956	Petersen, William S.	New Westminster	(2)
1951	—	Eklund, Otto	Camrose (retired)	(2)
1952	1956	Eriksson, Paul	Shaunavon	(1)
1952	1956	Eriksson, Harold	Scandia	(1)
1952	1953	Danielson, Karl	Edmonton (Augustana)	(1)
1953	1955	Manson, Harold	Erickson	(1)
1953	1956	Lindgren, Clifford	Meeting Creek	(1)
1953	1958	Sander, Alfred B.	Stockholm	(1)
1953	1956	Sundmark, Vernon	Marchwell	(1)
1953	1958	Wallin, Ralph	Saskatoon (Augustana)	(1)
1953	1957	Hesselgrave, William	Fort William	(1)
1953	1954	Oleson, Elmer	Fort Frances	Interim
1954	1960	Sjoberg, Donald W.	Edmonton (Augustana)	(1)
1954	—	Arvidson, John	Wetaskiwin	(1)
1954	1959	Erson, Frederick	Regina	(1)
1954	1957	Erickson, Robert E.	Percival	(1)
1954	1959	Lindquist, Dean	Fort Frances	
1954	1958	Olson, Paul H.	North Burnaby	(1)
1954	1959	Maigaard, Leonard H.	Vancouver	(1)
1955	1957	Berggren, Clifford G.	Haney	(1)
1955	1961	Berg, Dean	Calgary (Messiah)	(1)
1955	1962	Bowen, Edwin	Czar	(1)
1955	—	Christensen, Delmar D.	Assiniboia	(1)
1955	1962	Pearson, C. Robert	Camrose (C.L.B.I.)	(2)
1955	1957	Vedell, John	Kenora (Bethany)	(1)
1956	1958	Lindgren, Clifford	Marchwell	(2)
1956	—	Tengbom, Luverne C.	Missionary to Africa	(2)
1956	1960	Eriksson, Harold	New Westminster	(2)
1956	—	Odelberg, R.	Kinistino (retired)	(2)
1956	—	Eriksson, Paul	Kinistino	(2)
1956	1959	Ek, Robert L. O.	Camrose (parish)	(1)
1956	—	Johnson, Floyd E.	Kenora	(2)
1957	—	Vedell, John	Canadian Lutheran Council	(2)
1957	1960	Lewis, L. Floyd	Calgary (Regional Director)	
1957	—	Hesselgrave, William	Missionary to Africa	(2)
1957	1958	Erickson, Robert E.	Young	(2)
1957	—	Eriksson, Vincent	Shaunavon	(1)
1957	1957	Larson, Herman	Scandia	(3)
1957	1961	Lof, Garth	Winnipeg	(1)
1957	1960	Dickhart, Daniel	Edmonton (Christ)	(1)
1957	1961	Thelin, Llano	Calgary (First)	(1)
1957	1960	Sundmark, Vernon	Buchanan, Theodore	(2)
1957	1961	Fredriksson, Johann	Scandia	U.L.C.A.
1957	1960	Johnson, Oscar	Erickson	Lutheran Free Church
1958	—	Sander, Alfred	Atikokan	(2)
1958	1962	Wallin, Ralph	Fort William	(2)
1958	1962	Lundahl, Stuart P.	Saskatoon (Augustana)	(1)
1958	1961	Holmes, Corliss	Meeting Creek	(1)
1958	1960	Baglo, Ferdy	Whitewood	(1)
1958	1962	Erickson, Robert E.	Canadian Lutheran Council	(2)
1958	1959	Alden, Harry	North Burnaby	Interim

<i>From</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Place or Call</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1959	1961	Green, Morris	Lac du Bonnet	(1)
1959	—	Emberg, Duane	Haney	(1)
1959	—	Loreen, Ernie	Vancouver (Augustana)	(1)
1959	—	Peterson, Odeen	North Burnaby	(1)
1959	1960	Peterson, A. Edward	Fort Frances	Interim
1960	—	Ek, Robert L. O.	Regina	(2)
1960	1961	Lundeen, A. Milton	Edmonton (Augustana)	
1960	—	Sjoberg, Donald W.	Calgary (Regional Director)	(2)
1960	—	Baglo, Ferdy	Missionary to Africa	(2)
1960	—	Sundmark, Vernon	Fort Frances	(2)
1960	—	Chell, James	Stavely	(1)
1960	—	Baker, David	Edmonton (Christ)	(1)
1960	—	Mattson, Richard	Kenora (Bethany)	(1)
1960	—	Swedberg, Paul	Camrose (parish)	(1)
1960	—	Floreen, Harold	Saskatoon (Seminary)	
1960	1962	Olson, Otto A.	Saskatoon (Conference Pres.)	(2)
1960	—	Eriksson, Harold	Theodore	(2)
1961	—	Fredriksson, Johann	Erickson	U.L.C.A. (2)
1961	1962	Koski, George	Broadview	U.L.C.A.
1961	—	Miller, Arthur	Kelliher (from Lipton)	U.L.C.A.
1961	—	Holmes, Corliss	New Westminster	(2)
1961	—	Berg, Dean	North Vancouver	(2)
1961	—	Linquist, Leon	Edmonton (Augustana)	(1)
1961	—	Hasley, Ronald K.	Winnipeg	(1)
1961	—	Lof, Garth	Calgary (Messiah)	(2)
1961	—	Miller, Donald I.	Meeting Creek	
1961	—	Mattson, Norman O.	Calgary (First)	
1961	—	Sevold, Raymond	Scandia	U.L.C.A.
1962	—	Bowen, Edwin	Lac du Bonnet	(2)
1962	—	Ludwig, Hermann	Wainwright	(1)
1962	—	Pearson, C. Robert	Canadian Lutheran Council	(2)

## Code for notes:

- (1) First call upon ordination
- (2) Had served previously as pastor in Canada
- (3) Died while at this place

*Appendix III***Canada Conference Conventions**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
1913	May 23-26	Stockholm	1938	March 30-April 3	Calgary
1914	February 18-22	Winnipeg	1939	May 4-7	Stockholm
1915	December 25-28	Wetaskiwin	1940	May 2-5	Winnipeg
1916	March 30-April 2	Erickson	1941	April 17-20	Meeting Creek
1917	March 28-April 1	Czar	1942	May 7-10	Kenora
1918	March 12-17	Dubuc	1943	April 29-May 2	Shaunavon
1919	March 12-16	Kenora	1944	May 4-7	Scandia
1920	March 12-16	Kinistino	1945	April 12-15	Camrose
1921	May 18-22	Stockholm	1946	April 25-28	Saskatoon
1922	March 12-19	Percival	1947	April 17-20	Edmonton
1923	March 21-25	Winnipeg	1948	April 8-11	Regina
1924	March 19-23	Kenora	1949	May 5-8	Erickson
1925	March 17-22	Calgary	1950	May 4-7	Calgary
1926	March 25-29	Erickson	1951	April 19-22	Saskatoon
1927	March 16-20	Wetaskiwin	1952	May 1-4	Shaunavon
1928	March 21-25	Winnipeg	1953	April 16-19	Edmonton
1929	March 13-17	Kenora	1954	April 29-May 2	Kenora
1930	March 26-30	Shaunavon	1955	April 12-15	Regina
1931	March 4-8	Percival	1956	April 3-6	Meeting Creek
1932	March 9-13	Saskatoon	1957	April 4-7	Saskatoon
1933	April 19-23	Calgary	1958	April 10-13	Calgary
1934	April 4-8	Regina	1959	May 27-31	Stockholm
1935	April 3-7	Winnipeg	1960	April 20-24	Winnipeg
1936	March 25-29	Wetaskiwin	1961	April 5-9	Edmonton
1937	April 7-11	Saskatoon	1962	April 25-29	Assiniboia

**Summary:** There were 50 conventions, including the organizing convention.

*By Provinces:*

Saskatchewan .....	20
Alberta .....	16
Manitoba .....	9
Ontario .....	5

*By Months of year:*

February .....	1
March .....	17
April .....	21
May .....	10
December .....	1

*By Location:*

Winnipeg .....	6
Calgary .....	5
Kenora .....	5
Saskatoon .....	5
Stockholm .....	4
Erickson .....	3
Regina .....	3
Shaunavon .....	3
Edmonton .....	3

Wetaskiwin .....	3
Meeting Creek .....	2
Percival .....	2
Czar .....	1
Dubuc .....	1
Kinistino .....	1
Scandia .....	1
Camrose .....	1
Assiniboia .....	1

*It should also be noted that the Columbia Conference held its annual convention at Augustana Lutheran Church in Vancouver, B.C., in April, 1947.*







